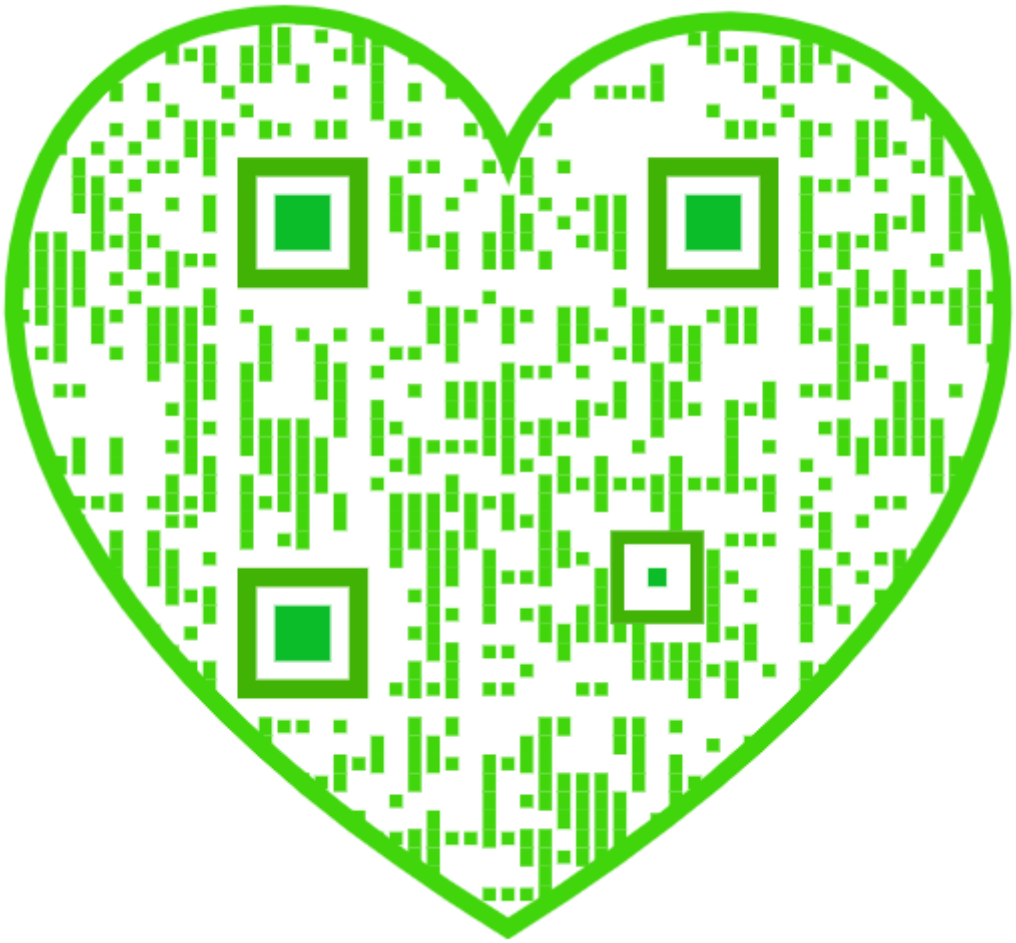

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OF

SPORTS AND PASTIMES

VOL. IV.

THE

ADMINTON MAGAZINE

OF

SPORTS AND PASTIMES

EDITED BY

ALFRED E. T. WATSON

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THE

BADMINTON MAGAZINE

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THE COVERTS

BY ALEX. INNES SHAND

COVERT shooting is almost the sole survival of the old-fashioned manner of sport, and even covert shooting, especially in the Southlands, has been inevitably degenerating into the battue. We use the word 'degenerating' advisedly, because although the battue is absurdly abused by those who know nothing about it, and though it tests the skill of the marksman like grouse driving or pigeon shooting, yet it cannot compare for the exhilaration of excitement with wilder and more irregular work. For the partridges, even in September, unfortunately, no man can go out nowadays with the well-broken couple of pointers and the drilled retriever at heel. In place of wading up to the ankle in hand-shorn stubbles, the fields have been swept clean as a tennis-lawn, and the straggling roots in the broad drills offer no satisfactory shelter. The birds are up and away before the dogs would be within drawing distance. Even with the muirfowl, in Yorkshire and on many of the best of the Scotch moors, driving is become the fashion, and with good reason. If birds *will* pack before the season has well begun, they must take the consequences. Moreover, driving incalculably increases the head of game. The old cocks who used to escape scot-free, leaving poults and cheepers to be butchered, head the flights as was always their custom, and are shot down in place of saving themselves to spoil the next

breeding season. No doubt the trimming of the rambling hedgerows and the grubbing of copses and spinneys in agricultural districts where the soil is valuable tend to make the battue a matter of necessity, if a gentleman means to offer fair sport to his friends. But even in these districts, and far more elsewhere, the coverts are the glory and beauty of the British Isles. We have no desire to make invidious comparisons, but on the Continent you have the forest rather than the covert. In our idea nothing can possibly be more gloomy than the endless stretches of dark pine in Scandinavia, whether they offer protection from the blazing summer sun or are snow-laden in the winter-time and spangled with icicles. In the glorious beech-woods of Germany you are impressed with a brooding sense of their solemnity, and tread gingerly, as during high mass in a cathedral, upon a crackling carpet of withered leaves. So you feel in looking down the aisles and arching cloisters, through the stately columns of the clean-stemmed pines in the valleys of the Schwarzwald, where the bracken beds are shrivelled and collapse to the first frosts. As for the French forests, where there are swamps and impenetrable thickets, they are so vast, and the dwarfed timber is so overcrowded, that herds of wolves breed securely in their recesses, and even experienced rangers lose their bearings in the mist or the dusk.

In the British Isles, on the other hand, all is lifelike and homelike, for everything sylvan is on a more moderate scale. Above all, the kindly damp of the climate makes the vegetation of the undergrowth flourish in rare luxuriance. Shakespeare, Milton, Spenser, Scott, and scores of other poets have sung the rich picturesqueness of the bosky bourns, with their tangled wealth of natural shrubbery. Except among the firs, it is seldom indeed that you get an open view ahead and beneath in the British woods. Nor do we know in which of the three kingdoms the woodland scenes are most enchanting. Look around from any eminence in England, even in the level midlands or the hunting shires. There was a time when the country from the Cheviots to the Channel, from Bamborough Castle to Michael's Mount, was almost unbroken woodland with occasional clearings round town or hamlet. Everywhere the sylvan shreds and patches of that prehistoric period have, latterly at least, been jealously guarded. And now, in this utilitarian age, the 'amenities' of romantic woodland are recognised as having a market value, which is the surest guarantee for their preservation. Looking out over the landscapes, you see the gabled roof of the ancient hall, sheltering in

the foliage of ancestral woods; the towers and spires of the village churches, surrounded by tall groups of trees and rising above the venerable yews in the churchyards; the chimneys of the farm-houses embosomed like the hall; and the mill lying low in the vale among the beds of willow and alder. Even in the copses of the grassy shires and of the Home Counties you may wander away into a world of romance. We know nothing wilder on the Scotch border or in the Yorkshire dales than some of the valleys in West Kent, although it is true they are on a smaller scale, and the grandeur is Lilliputian. But there are dells with as steep a dip as the Derncleugh of 'Guy Mannering,' with the brook brawling unseen under matted foliage in the bottom, and but scanty room for a gun on either side; while the man in the middle, as he threads his devious way, can seldom bring the gun swiftly to his shoulder. But elsewhere and anywhere there may be idyllic surprises in store for you. You come on the meandering streamlet that has hollowed out its banks, under dense canopies of the bramble and wild rose intertwined with the clematis and clinging honeysuckle, where in a gloom that may be said to be visible at noonday you may hear the sullen plunge of the otter, or listen to the frequent plashing of the water-voles as they dive at the vibration of the foot-tread. Or after warning from the faint earth-smell floating in the air, you come out upon the swampy precincts of the sedgy pool, where the water-hens have their favourite nesting-places in the reeds and the pike are said to grow to portentous dimensions. In the New Forest, though horribly spoiled by prosaic plantation, you have still the old forest scenery on a noble scale. There are farmhouses almost as solitary, though far more beautiful, than anything among the charred stumps and snake-fences of a Canadian settlement, where the belled cattle will go astray in the fenceless wilds, and where a wandering herd of shaggy ponies may make irruptions into the old-fashioned flower garden. There are glades where the gipsies and caravan vagabonds have their immemorial camping-places, and hamlets with their bulging roofs of ragged thatch, peopled by charcoal-burning aborigines, whose ancestors have cursed the devastations of the Conqueror, or rejoiced over the corpse of the ruthless Red King.

If we change the scene to the North, the beauties only change their character. In Northumberland, where the woods take naturally to the waters and the sheltered valleys, you have the plantations skirted by the beds of gorse, redolent of perfume in early summer, where the small birds make their nests in safety by thousands, and the foxes have their earths in the thick of the

rabbit warrens. Or go to the Scotch Highlands, where the birches feathering down to its brink are mirrored in the shallows of the sleeping loch, and the gleaming white stems rise out of thickets of bracken, bramble, and bilberry, of holly, honeysuckle, and wild rose. Or to the genial shores of West Ireland, warmed by the Gulf Stream, where the myrtles through the mildness of the winter are uninjured, and the arbutus flourishes as in Southern Italy, laden with the luscious red berries that tempt the pheasants. And all these coverts are swarming with animal life, for they are as inviting to migrants and birds of passage as they are safe refuges for the natives. Of course the game must reckon with the exigencies of the shooting season, but that is in conformity with the inexorable laws of nature. And game preserving presses hard on the beasts of prey, and on some others that are unfairly classed as vermin. But that only makes the covert a sanctuary for almost everything harmless and ornamental. The copses are melodious with joyous song in the spring, and as full of animation in the more silent autumn. We pity the man who cannot pass the time agreeably, while kicking his heels at the cold corner of a lingering beat, as the harbingers of the first hares and pheasants pass in review before him, from the chattering jays and clamorous jackdaws down to the screaming blackbird and twittering willow-wren.

It must be admitted that our British coverts hold nothing more formidable than the fox, or possibly a badger: for the wild cat and marten cat are well nigh extinct even in the most remote districts of the Highlands. You have not the excitement of a wounded lynx dropping on your shoulders from the pine boughs, of being hugged by the unfriendly bear you have cornered, or of startling a sounder of wild pig from their siesta with the chance of being charged and ripped by the old tusker. Nor do we know that that is greatly to be regretted, as it would assuredly upset the admirable arrangements of the battue. Acclimatation of ferocities has been tried and has failed. Gilbert White tells us in one of his letters that General Howe, who was the Crown grantee of Alice Holt Forest, turned out some wild boars and a few buffalo to boot, when the countryfolk rose upon them and destroyed them. The Chillingham wild cattle still perpetuate the fierce breed of ancient Caledonia, so dramatically commemorated in the 'Bride of Lammermoor' and the ballad of 'Cadyow Castle.' They are ugly customers at the best, and not to be lightly approached, of which we once had personal experience when stalking them from motives of curiosity. But there seems to be

SHELTERED BOWERS

no reason why covert shooting should not be varied by turning out some of the sporting birds we have only half domesticated. The turkey and the guinea-fowl retain so much of their wild nature, that they will always for choice stray far from the farmsteading to make their nests in the roots of a hedge or in some impenetrable patch of bramble. The hens are reported missing, and the disappearance is credited to the foxes, till they turn up again some fine morning with the chicks trooping at their heels. His Majesty George II. was as partial to turkey shooting as any West American pot-hunter. In his time there were flocks of turkeys in Richmond Park, which are said seldom to have numbered fewer than two thousand. They fattened on the acorns and beechmast; they were fed besides from stacks of barley, and the cocks often grew to thirty pounds weight. There were wild turkeys in Wynnstay Park, we believe, so late as the middle of the present century, and likewise at Lord Ducie's seat in Gloucestershire. At the same time peafowl and guinea-fowl had been breeding and multiplying at Aston Hall and in others of the Warwickshire woods.

But, after all, in our wilder covert shooting—say, on the shores of Loch Fyne or the innumerable sea-arms in Western Scotland—no one need complain of lack of variety. The keeper sends word by a swift-footed gillie to the nearest telegraph office that a flight of woodcock has come in with the November frosts. Responding promptly to the despatch, the guns drive to the ground through all the autumn beauties of a Scotch Riviera, along a winding road now commanding broad views of the ocean sounds and archipelagoes, and now dipping into the depths of the gorge or ravine where the dimness is fitfully illuminated by stray shafts of the flickering sunshine. The difficulty in these back-of-the-world shootings is in recruiting a sufficiency of beaters; for men or even boys—in these high education days—are as hard to come by as for the chamois drives in the highlands of Tyrol and the Salzkammergut. But the numerical inefficiency of the force only increases the excitement, for as the guns are going forward in line with the natives, they do a good deal of the seeking and finding for themselves. The great thing is to take it leisurely and do nothing in a hurry. Indeed, not unfrequently you come on a place where anything but the slowest progress is impossible, and as you force your way through the thicket or make the détour to get over the burn, friends and attendants are constrained to wait for you. The walking may be toilsome, but it is singularly picturesque. The rills come meandering down from the moors

above, in a succession of deep rifts and broken clefts. In the rains they are rushing streams; now they are fast frost-bound, except here and there, where the flow is too swift. The hollies fretted over with the flying snow-showers form so many sheltered bowers to tempt the snipe and the woodcock. The intervening slopes, clothed with the heather and withered bracken, are studded with clumps of holly, fir, and dwarf oak, with a sprinkling of hanging birches and rowan trees, bearing their ruddy fruit. The lower boughs of the spruces are weighed down with the snow and so many natural blankets or *tentes-abris*, to make the roe comfortable in their resting places. For there the roes in the wintry cold appear to lose much of their natural timidity, or rather it takes another form. In place of stealing away ahead at the first sound of the sticks, they crouch in their forms like hares, in the hope that the enemy will pass them. And on these shootings they are almost as numerous as the hares. So you must load with moderate-sized shot and take your chance, for you never know what may get up. You are fording a burn gingerly in fear of a slip, when a woodcock is flushed from beneath one of the hollies. You tread on the trailing bough of a spruce, and up springs a roe from under your boots. The guns close in round some likely-looking scrub of oak and mountain ash, while keepers and beaters struggle in to thresh it out. A rabbit or two come out as you expected, and then, when it seems that all is over, there is the rush of a rocketing cock-pheasant, or perhaps a hen. Lord or lady, it makes little difference: in those solitudes you are not over-particular as to sex. Climbing one of the watercourses to the broad belt of skirting upper plantation, the guns are disposed in it and above it, to do their best. Were you to attempt to walk the lower side systematically, you would topple over into the abyss. That wood is a famous haunt of the black game. As the cock skims the tops of the fir trees in his powerful flight, it is into that abyss he goes crashing when stopped by the charge. For somehow the black game always appeared to head to the seaward, and hard work it often was to retrieve them in the labyrinth of brushwood. On the upper side were the heather hills and the open moors, and more than once the beating has roused outlying red-deer from their lairs. The close of the day's proceedings was almost invariably satisfactory, nor need it be said that the mixed bag made a trophy that would have gladdened the soul of a Weenix.

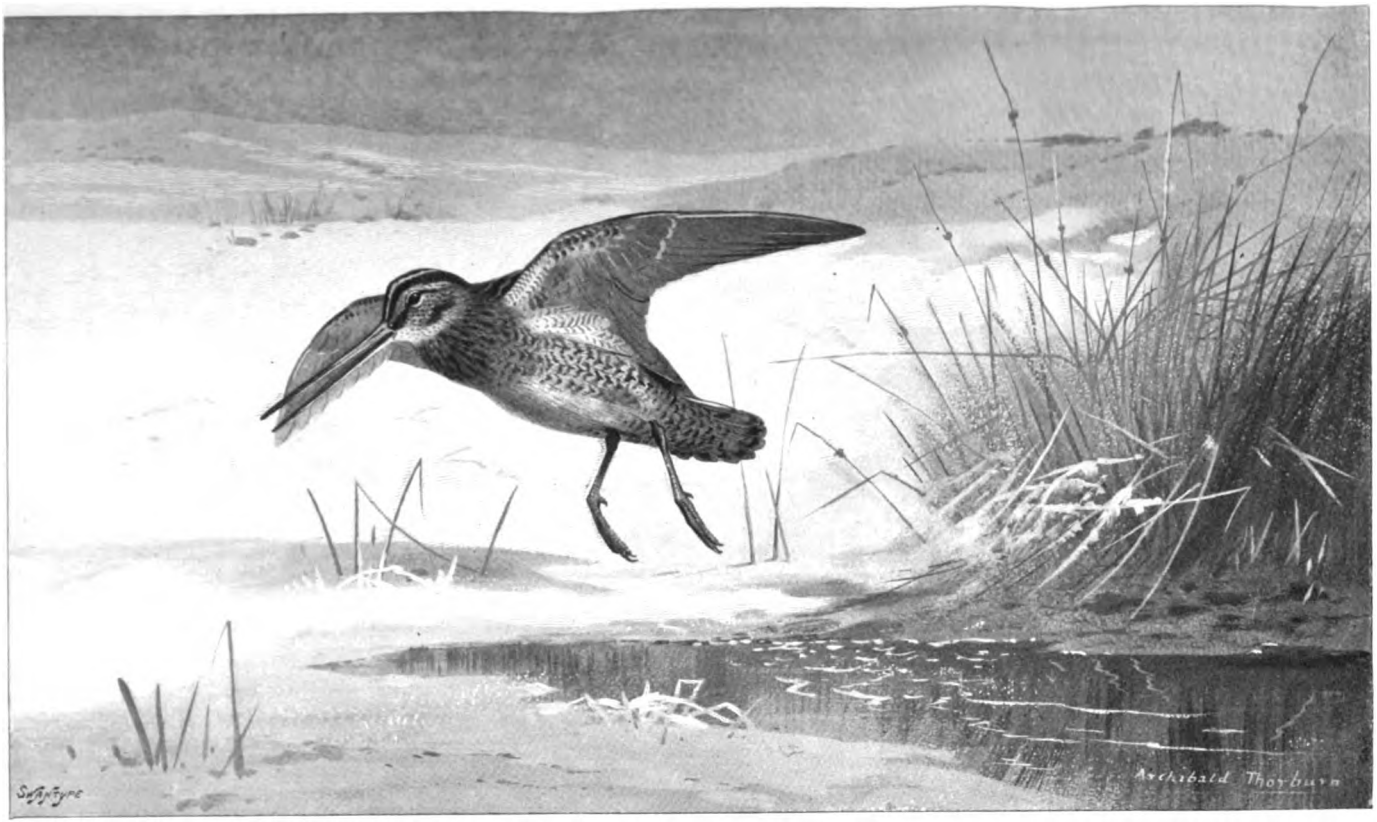
Talking of woodcock, it is somewhat surprising that killing a cock should still be considered a triumph. No doubt it is partly because woodcock are really wild game—birds of passage, here

to-day, and fled to-morrow. Consequently there is a certain romance about bagging them. But it comes chiefly, we believe, from a surviving tradition of the primæval days when the sportsman made awkward play with his single-barrelled flint gun. It was no joke bringing that unwieldy weapon to the present, and the flint ignited the powder so leisurely that sea-fowl had time to dive to the flash. The mystery was as to how the cocks were ever dropped, and we fancy that when they did come down, luck had a good deal to do with it. Let a woodcock get well away, and he will go winding and twisting through the tree-tops like the capercailzie, for both birds are well served by their instinct, and can take uncommonly good care of themselves. You must take a cock when you can, as you snap at a rabbit, and if you shoot quick, as he generally rises in a glade or an opening, the shot should be easy enough, though the charge goes rather ball-like. With their congener the snipe, by the way, it is different. He gets up in the open, and if you coolly wait, after the preliminary jerkings to right and left, which are the eccentric prologue to a steadier performance, he usually shoots out straight before beginning to soar.

It is seldom one finds such roe shooting as in the circumstances we have sketched, but the roe is always a great addition to the battue in the North. A chartered denizen of the wastes and woods, he seeks the deepest solitudes of extensive plantations. Hence he is scarcely the ornament of the landscape he ought to be, for he rarely shows. Strolling quietly about with the gun in the woodland glades, you may occasionally catch the gleam of a white stern vanishing behind a tree trunk. Few creatures are more graceful, and very few more destructive. The roe steals out to feed at night or in the early morning, and there is no prettier sight, except to the unfortunate farmer, than a family party in the high green corn, delicately nibbling the tender blades. Somehow they are less shy in Germany, where you may see them any day of an afternoon grazing with the cattle in the sequestered valleys surrounded by woods. With us, when they keep themselves to themselves in their sylvan retreats, they make frightful havoc of the young saplings. That is the best antidote to sentimentalism with the tender-hearted shooter who is greatly inclined to spare them for their beauty, and feels remorseful when he plunges the hunting-knife in the quivering chest. Nothing keeps one up to the mark at a Scottish battue like the expectation of roe. Instinctive timidity has bred intense suspicion. The sight is as keen as the sense of smell. The

crackle of a twig, the striking of a match, or the faint whiff of a cigarette will give timely warning, and like all deer they will rather charge the line of the beaters than face an unknown danger in front. The gun standing motionless at his post has no notice of their approach. The roe moves as if shod in velvet, as indeed he is: silent as the shadow he throws forward in the sunshine, he emerges phantom-like from the screen of twigs, which has never rustled at his passage. The quick eye in its circular glance embraces everything: he has a glimpse of the sportsman, who may be looking the other way, and with one bound into the air, like the South African springbok, he clears the ride and vanishes as he appeared. The roe is on no friendly terms with the fox, who freely takes toll of the young fawns when he finds them, and the fox is another contributor to the excitement of a Scottish field-day. Though there may be no hounds within a couple of counties, at first it goes against the grain of the Southron to shoot him; but as he does more mischief in the preserves than in the poultry yards, he soon comes to be proscribed and outlawed as the marauder he is. If the roe is the incarnation of shrinking timidity, the Scotch fox is the embodiment of audacious impudence. Being never hunted by the hounds he grows pursy and lazy in the lowlands, but his wiles set the keepers and their traps at defiance. He attains to enormous size and is always in sleek condition. Like Major Dugald Dalgetty, he never misses an opportunity of laying in the provant or replenishing the larder. One instance of his coolness in difficulties we remember. It was a party where the beaters mustered strong, and having lunched freely, in defiance of rule, were making a most unholy noise. There was a cry of 'Cock!' and a shot, a second cry of 'Down!' and a pause, while unsuccessful search was made for the bird. We were uncocking the gun preparatory to leaving our station, when an old fox emerged from the midst of the hullabaloo, with the missing woodcock in his mouth—for he had quietly retrieved it.

It is a sharp descent from the roe to the rabbit, but the rabbit is in every respect a most estimable animal when his ravages are kept within due bounds. He is unwisely neglected by fashionable cooks, for he is excellent when coming from the kitchen in any shape from the mulligatawny soup to the smothering in onions, with a sauce *à la Soubise*. No animal affords finer shooting practice—the only drawback for novices is that he gets them into the habit of snap-shooting, and he is at his best and brightest among the sandhills rolling down to the beach—with



HE GETS UP IN THE OPEN

these scattered patches of the prickly gorse the rabbits have been cropping into fantastic forms. The dazed rabbits emerging at the end of a driven covert are mobbed and shot down like sheep. The rabbits bolting across a narrow ride demand as swift calculation of the chances as if you were firing at a streak of lightning. Let skilful shots say what they will, there must still be a large element of luck there. But in the sandhills with their hollows and the clumps of whin, with the rank bent grass in which the colonists bask through the day, and which sometimes is thick enough to cover the scuttle to the burrow, both the gun and the quarry have tolerably fair play, though doubtless an expert would lay odds on his shooting. Then there is the exhilaration of the exercise, with its strain on the back sinews: the innocent intoxication of the brine-laden breezes, the wide views out to seaward, with the sails and the trails of steamer smoke, the merry clamour of the seagulls swooping overhead, the gabbling and calling of the waders that are foraging below high-water mark, and on the other side the complaining alarm notes of the lapwings, who, though they have got rid of their cherished nurslings months before, are nevertheless as fussy as ever.

We have left the grand battue to the last, because it would tax the ingenuity of a sporting Macaulay to say anything fresh about it. Yet we may cast a passing glance at its picturesque and humorous aspects. There is no more genuinely English sight than the cheery muster before the doors of some great mansion on a day that is expected to make a record bag. There is the host, who, if he understands his duties, is the strategical organiser of it all, and he should be set upon making things pleasant for his guests, and seeing that each man has his fair share of the shooting. He ought to keep the whip hand of the important head keeper, whose looks are anxiously watched by his obsequious satellites in velveteen. Then there is the array of long-gaitered beaters in fustian—an irregular levy, who have been eagerly expecting the great outing in the woods. On the whole they are a well-fed and rosy-faced lot, with sturdy calves and athletic forms. Some of the elders may have warnings of rheumatism in the near distance, and tramp about with a perceptible string-halt; but they compare favourably with the pallid artisans of the towns, and you can see that their lines have fallen in sanitary places. There are the guns with their carriers and loaders, for the most part as fine specimens of manhood as England can boast, and with eyesight as sharp as their nerves are steady. For at the biggest shoots they are generally picked men, who will

make death as pleasant as is possible under any circumstances. Sentimental humanitarians mourn over the butchery of hand-fed pheasants. Why, the hand-fed pheasant is one of the luckiest of living creatures. He is reared from the shell in the lap of luxury, and supplied with all the delicacies of the season, till he chooses to vary his diet by strolling abroad. His retreats are kept undisturbed, and his privacy is never intruded upon, save by the raiding poacher, who must make the venture at his peril. The pheasant must die at last, like all of us, but even at the methodical battue he has a fair chance. And when he falls to the crack shot, it is a case of instantaneous collapse, and he is dead before he rebounds from the grass. Then, if he were grateful for all the care bestowed upon him, he should rejoice to know that he may sell for a mere trifle in warm weather, and furnish the cheapest of dainties for the modest dinner party, as the rabbit is the luxury of artisans in the manufacturing districts. So the pheasant preserver who has reared his birds regardless of expense is a benefactor to his species when he sends them to market,

But to return from the finish to the start. There is the exhilarating walk from the house to the home coverts, through sights that have inspired immortal painters. The skeleton boughs of the lofty trees of the rookery, with the rustle of their few and faded leaves, standing out Corot-like against the sky in the greyness of vanishing mists; the group of gazing cattle standing fetlock-deep in the withered bracken, suggestive of Cooper or Rosa Bonheur; the sheep that have huddled together at the noise of the men and the yelping of the retrievers, with the gleam on the fleecy backs that Millet has so often given us; or perhaps the herds of half-scared but still trustful fallow-deer reminding us of many a scene by Landseer. The interest changes when the covert is disturbed by beaters, who should make play with their sticks, and be chary of using their voices. We can conceive the consternation in the sanctuary caused by the unwonted inroad. The small birds gathering for their migration are the first to go; there are the indignant protests of jays and magpies; the pigeons take hurried flight for the open; the squirrels scrambling up the trunks, with frequent pauses, finally take refuge in the tallest trees, whence they peer down at the proceedings. As the line advances, the rabbits and hares hustling together rise in startled motion like so many mites in a mouldy cheese; and the pheasants are running purposelessly to and fro, until one more hysterical than the rest gives the signal for a simultaneous scattering. Then comes the ceaseless

crack of the breech-loaders, while breeches are getting warm though the guns are being changed. It is to be hoped that all is going smoothly and pleasantly, but there is always the off-chance of two disagreeables which the most considerate host cannot altogether control. There is the dangerous shot, and there is the jealous shot. The danger comes in chiefly when an excitable man is unfortunately told off to walk with the beaters. In these circumstances he should shoot at nothing except ground game or sky-scrapers, but he is apt to blaze at the birds flying forward breast high, when he may blind a companion or bag a stop. More common still is the jealous shot, who is a detestable nuisance. By snatching at other men's game, and claiming promiscuously what never belonged to him, he is likely enough to put the coolest of his neighbours off their shooting, and in any case he is pretty sure to ruffle their tempers. Besides, it may be almost taken for granted that he is something of a tailor, and mangles even more birds than he misses. And nothing is more painful to the genuine sportsman than to know that crippled victims are dropping around him beyond sight and search, to suffer and die in lingering torments.

THE LIGHTERMAN

BY WILLIAM PIGOTT

THE hillside gently sloping from the Humber is scarred with many pits. From the Yorkshire side you may see the white hollows when the brick-fields to the east and the wooded hills to the west have been lost in the distance. Not all the pits are disused. Some still discharge, though slumberously, their daily tribute to the great world. For this they have each a small pier jutting into the brown water, and slimed afresh with every turbid tide.

Standing back from the river, and looking westward, the land has a beauty of its own, and a great glory when the sun sets over the wandering Ouse. But come down to the edge, and no sunset that ever was can destroy the offensive reality of the thick water and the oozing mud.

So, at least, it seemed to me. And when I was invaded by the thought, I was standing on the shingle at the side of one of the jetties. The quarrymen had left their work, but there were signs of it in the trucks which still remained on the pier, and the lighter straining gently at its moorings below.

My impression had been that there were duck in this district. If I had believed the reports of some of my informants, I should have expected to see, at least, as many as any other species of bird. This was the end of my third day's outing. I had seen

three ducks—that is, a duck for each day—and I had not come within gunshot of a duck at all. Consequently, my reflections as I watched the water lapping on the girders were not of a nature which I am prepared to lay before the reader.

A man was standing at my elbow. He had been there some time. Presently I turned and looked at him.

The fellow touched his cap. 'Beg pardon, Mister!'

I detest to be called 'Mister.' And besides, there was the matter of the absent ducks. 'Look here,' I said, 'you have been standing at my side for the last five minutes. I never asked you to, and I don't like the smell of that tobacco. You will do me a favour by moving yourself and your pipe a little further leeward.'

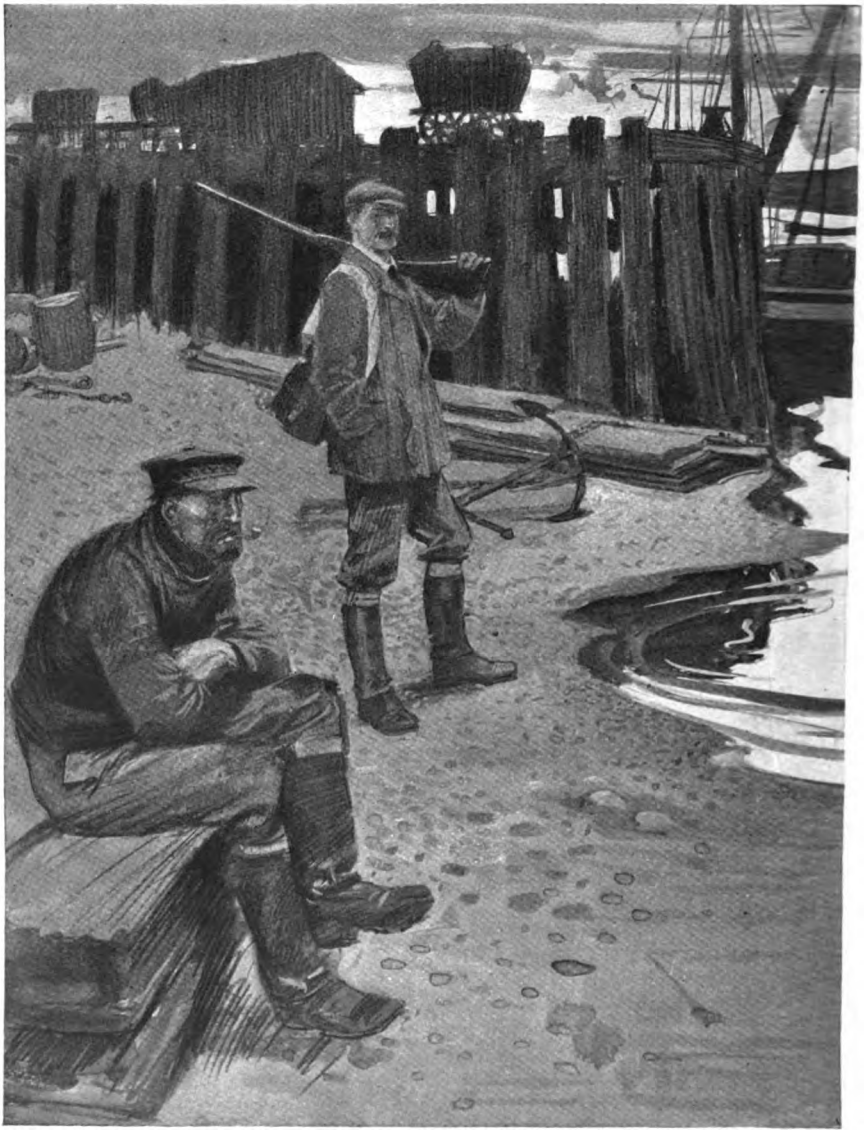
He continued to occupy his original position, and shortly I crossed to the further side of the jetty. It was, of course, open to me to depart altogether. But the policy, though perhaps a wise one, held too great a suggestion of running away to be palatable. So I merely moved off.

The man followed me. Such an action on his part was perhaps to be expected. Still I resented it. The glance that I had bestowed upon him had not been long, but had been sufficiently comprehensive. I was aware that he wore dirty drab trousers and a dirty drab cap, and that, saving his boots, the remainder of his outward attire was a dirty blue jersey. Such being the case, it might fairly be assumed that he was a person who had neither the means nor the inclination to devote attention to a considerable toilet.

But the promise of the man's clothes, though trifling, was not upheld by his face. Soap and water and a razor could have effected much, but that which remained would still have been unalluring. There was a cast in one eye, and the other, which looked at you, had a sinister expression in it that was not pleasant. His nose turned away from the eye with a cast in it, as though anxious to disavow an acquaintance. The eye, of course, took similar measures, and to me the combination was familiar. It might have been in a previous existence, but somewhere I had met the man before. Under every circumstance, therefore, I was ready to resent it when he followed me over the jetty.

It was chiefly, perhaps, that by my ill-humour and the man's persistence I was placed in a position difficult to maintain with dignity. In time it became oppressive. It is exacting to look for long, and with proper composure, across two miles of muddy water at a church spire. At the end of the sixth minute I found that I must strike my flag.

The fellow was seated on the bank, quietly smoking. The attitude was innocent enough. Yet I was aware he did not



THE FELLOW WAS SEATED ON THE BANK, QUIETLY SMOKING

propose I should leave the spot until he had unburdened himself of whatever it was he wished to say.

'Who are you?' I asked.

He pointed with his pipe stem to the barge.

'You are the lighterman?'

'Yuss.'

'Very well, Mr. Lighterman, what do you want to say to me?'

I thought my tone was sufficiently conciliatory, but he had his grievance. 'When a bloke wants to do a gent a good turn, 'e doesn't orter got to put up with no insult.'

It was difficult to conceive what 'good turn' he could have in view. Still, I thought it as well to assuage him. 'Perhaps, under the circumstances,' I remarked, 'it was a little hard.'

'It was blessed hard.'

'Well,' I said, 'don't cry about it. If you have anything to say, let us have it.'

Up to this point he had not honoured me with an inspection. Now he raised his head, and looked me in the face with his straight eye. I found it more than ever hard to believe that a generous impulse could lie behind that vile eye. Furthermore, the feeling of acquaintance strengthened. I dismissed the theory of the previous existence. In this world, and in no other, had I seen him before.

He pointed to my gun. 'It's a big 'un,' he said.

'It should be. It's an eight-bore.'

'I reckon you're after ducks.'

The remark tickled me. 'Yes,' I said, 'a long way after.'

'Mebbe you'd like to get a bit nearer?'

This was a sage observation. I assured him that, above all things, I should like to get a bit nearer.

'I can take you to where a couple lie.'

I doubted his *bona fides*. 'It is late,' I said.

He shrugged his shoulders. 'You orter know your own bisness.'

Obviously. And my fingers were twitching for a shot. After all, why should he invent such a story? Of course he would expect his reward. On the supposition of his sincerity his object was plain. On no other supposition was there a conceivable object.

'How do you know they are there?' I inquired.

'I seed 'em yesternight, and I've seed 'em afore.'

'How far is it?'

'Half a mile.'

'Quick, then; stir yourself, or we shall lose the light.'

He obeyed with an alacrity that surprised me, and his face lighted with a joy that seemed almost malicious, and was certainly disproportionate. The incongruity of it impressed me so far that, after going a few steps, I called to him.

'You seem,' I remarked, 'inordinately pleased, my friend, that I have agreed to come after these ducks.'

'Well, and why not?'

'On the contrary, why?'

'I don't know what you think,' he replied, 'but I reckon that a gent as won't pay a poor man for 'is trouble ain't no gent at all.'

I was not satisfied with the explanation, but nevertheless I continued to follow. He led me along a path by the side of a small fir wood, and presently we emerged at the head of the pit. Our track ran a bare three yards from the edge. It struck me as an unlikely spot. But my attention for the moment was directed elsewhere.

The lighterman had come to a stand, and was gazing backward over the chasm. I followed his lead, and thought that my companion had done well to look back. The truck line to the quarry was cut through the fir wood, and from the altitude we had reached there could be seen over the spikes of the trees a magnificent spectacle. Facing us, the Yorkshire hills, thickly wooded, tipped here and there with a turret and pinnacle, stretched to the horizon. In the hollow lay the broad river—like a great lake—not brown now, but gold and red and shining white, with a black boat sailing to the sunset. Then the fir wood, and immediately beneath us a sheer fall of a hundred feet or more to the solid rock.

While I looked, I carried the eight-bore loosely over my shoulder. To my consternation it was suddenly gripped from behind and jerked from me. I faced round, and found it had passed into the possession of the lighterman.

'And so,' I said, 'you have come out, have you?'

It will be understood from this that my recollection had returned, though too late to be of much assistance. The last occasion upon which the double peculiarity of the man's features had afflicted me had been in an assize court. At that time it had been my business—I had almost said my pleasure—to do what I might towards securing him a term of five years' penal servitude for an aggravated assault on a policeman. As he left the dock he had treated me to some abusive and threatening language, which had seemed paltry enough then, but which on

the edge of a lone cliff assumed a different complexion. My remark, therefore, though spoken, I trust, with sufficient complacence, can by no means be taken as showing the index to my true feelings. Indeed, I recognised that one of those turns had

'AND SO,' I SAID, 'YOU HAVE COME OUT, HAVE YOU?'

come which try a man's nerves, and that life was a far sweeter thing than I had sometimes thought.

The fellow showed a certain vindictive triumph in his face, and, when he spoke, in his voice also. Otherwise he was collected. I should have preferred my chances had he been inclined to renew the manner of his stormy exit from the court.

'Yuss, I've come out,' he said calmly. 'Mebbe you'll remember what it was I said afore I went in?'

I affected indifference. 'You said so many things.'

'Mebbe you'll remember I said I'd kill you?'

I did so remember, but I was not concerned to tell him so. 'You will be good enough to return my gun,' I said.

He had so effected the position that I was now standing with my back to the cliff, facing him. Thus he held a strategic advantage. Further, he was a brawny vagabond, and, if he looked me in the face, looked down.

'I reckon,' he said, 'that you know what I've got ye 'ere for.'

I shrugged my shoulders.

'I'm going to pitch you into the pit.' He said it coolly, but the venom in his face was very vile.

It was impossible to doubt that he intended to attempt what he said. Therefore I looked round in the hope of gaining some assistance.

My tormentor laughed. 'You'd like a warder or two, mebbe, and a set o' bars—aye, and a court full o' lying lawyers.' He pointed to a cottage in a distant hollow. 'Yon's your nearest place, and it's more nor a mile off. You may bet,' he added sardonically, 'I knew where them ducks orter lie.'

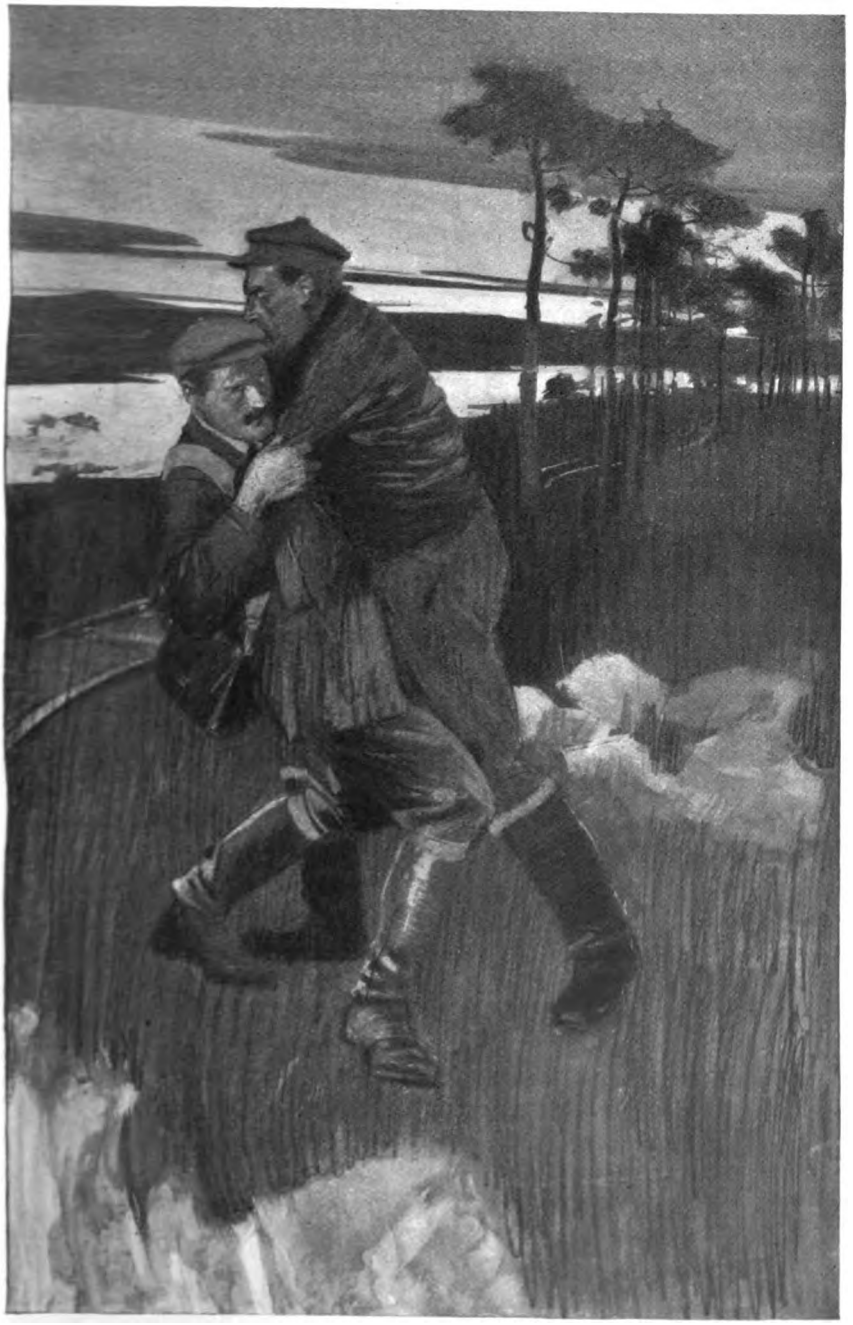
'You scoundrel!'

Then he dropped the gun and grappled with me. His arms were like thongs of steel. At the first grip it seemed that my ribs would crack, and the breath be crushed out of me. But the feeling passed, and for a time I held my own.

In the fierceness of the struggle his breath came in rough, hoarse bellows. I could feel it thick and hot upon my neck. I hated him for that. And as we strained and swayed we drew nearer to the cliff.

Then I knew that my strength was failing. In time it must fail altogether, and the long fall to the white rock would follow. It was horrible, but it was inevitable. So I thought. At last he had me on my hands and knees. I could see a church on the Yorkshire shore. I suppose that as long as I live I shall remember how it stood, and how the trees sheltered it from the west. I wondered if they were singing in the church. Such a thought was strange, because it was foreign to me. I had not been a man given to thinking much about things that pertain to a church. It seemed then that it might have been better for me had I thought more.

On a sudden I had something to say. It was not much, but



THEN I KNEW THAT MY STRENGTH WAS FAILING

a spent man may lack the power to say even a little. At last I spoke it, but hardly. 'You can shoot me.'

There was no answer. But the man's hold sensibly relaxed, so that I drew a deep breath.

'I can last some time yet. Help may come. You can shoot me in two minutes.'

The grip loosened still further, and by an effort I got upon my feet. Albeit, he still held me, warily.

I pointed to a hedge near by. 'I will go to that spot,' I said, 'and stand. From here you shall fire at me.'

'No,' he replied, after pondering, 'it'll not do. That'd be a hanging job.'

'And this?' I asked. 'What will this be?'

'This,' he explained, 'will be a accident.'

Surely he had laid his plans well. I had given him credit for no such subtle villany. Yet I had a sufficient answer:

'I am shooting wild game. I come to a hedge that must be crossed. I might have crossed it in safety. But when I am found with the gun at my side, men will know that I have stumbled.'

Without loosing his hold, he stooped and picked up the eight-bore. 'These things is not much in my line,' he said, looking diffidently at the mechanism. 'I don't know as I ever shot one off.'

'It is easy. With a gun that size, you cannot miss.'

He turned a fierce look at me. 'Well, an' if I can't miss, why are you so blamed ready to be blazed at?'

'It is quick,' I answered. 'The other is slow torture, for I must struggle.'

At last he released me, and took the gun in both his hands. On him also the strain had told, for his arms were not steady. He held it like a strange thing, nervously. As he raised it to his shoulder, I made away.

I went quickly, taking a course at right angles with the line of the pit. Thus the lighterman would stand facing the open country, and with space behind him. To this end had I been working. Yet I almost repented the roughness of the justice. If I knew my duck-gun—and I thought I did—a novice would not fire it with his back to the edge of a precipice and remain upon the top.

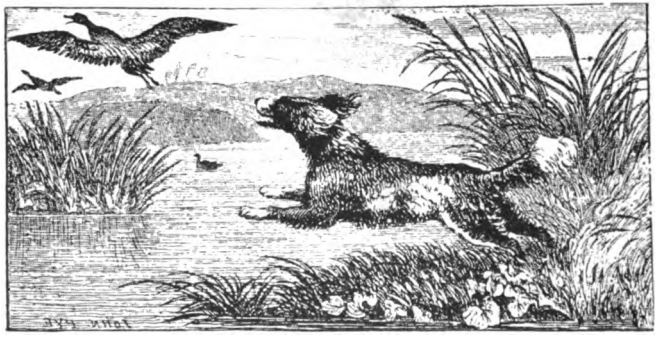
When the hedge in front of me had still to be reached by some yards, the gun banged in the stillness. I felt a tingle in the shoulder and another in the left ear; but, as I had reckoned,

the weight of the charge went harmlessly over my head. After the report there was a single loud cry—wild, piercing, chilling to the blood. Its echo followed the crack of the gun from rock to

I FAINTED THEN

rock. Presently I turned. A little dust was rising at the fringe of the cliff.

I fainted then. Looking back over a bridge of days, I think it was not a wonderful thing to do.



MORE NOTES ON OLD ENGLISH GAMES

BY ANTONY GUEST

BANDY-BALL.

As a rule our ancestors did not trouble themselves about precision of workmanship in the implements that they used in their pastimes, nor did they concern themselves to draw up strict rules for the proper enjoyment of the amusements that they loved. All such things are modern inventions—perhaps we take our games more seriously now. We have our manuals in abundance, while tools are manufactured with a degree of nicety that defies improvement. No wonder we can make long breaks at billiards and tall scores at cricket, and are continually able to gratify our vanity by the destruction of records. Fancy an ancient golfer turning out with a caddy by his side laden with such elaborate machinery as that which is considered indispensable on modern links! Our ancestors when on amusement bent found any material good enough for their purpose.

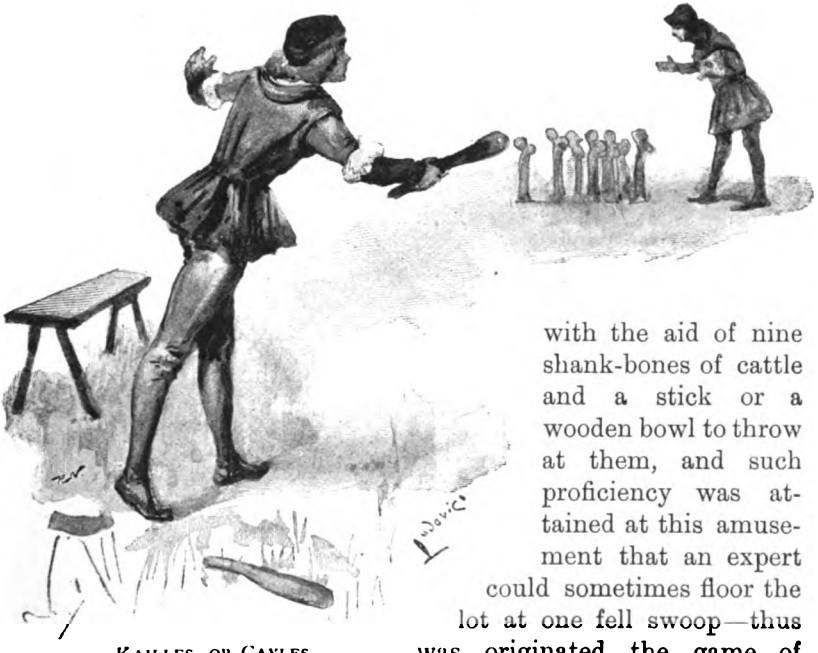
The player at golf—or bandy-ball, as it was called in mediæval days—was content to select from the hedge a stout stick, suitably curved at one end, and to trim it himself, while he was not above constructing his own ball by rounding a root of briar or

QUOITS

box. And if he 'got into a scrape,' there was some credit in getting out of it with dexterity. (By the way, everyone does not know that this common phrase originated in the game of golf.) So with quoits, an equally ancient amusement, that can hardly be derived from the Roman *discus*, as some people think, inas-

much as the English game is one of skill, while the classic pastime was a trial of strength. The game of quoits was not always played with the deftly shaped missiles that are in use to-day. The old English players, who had no other means available, were quite happy to use horse-shoes, and perhaps found additional stimulus to the enjoyment of making 'ringers' in the fact that the recreation was prohibited by Act of Parliament.

Kailles, or Cayles, which was pleasantly varied by Closh-cayles and club-cayles, could be played well enough (notwithstanding that it had also been made unlawful by a sapient legislature)



KAILLES, OR CAYLES

with the aid of nine shank-bones of cattle and a stick or a wooden bowl to throw at them, and such proficiency was attained at this amusement that an expert could sometimes floor the lot at one fell swoop—thus was originated the game of Ninepins.

The old rustic game of 'Nine Men's Morris' that exercised the wits of our peasantry from time immemorial down to a very recent period, required no more than a few beans and a square figure cut in the turf under the grateful shade of a spreading tree. There on a summer's day, while enjoying the midday meal that they had earned by hard work in the fields all the morning, the yokels would indulge in a pastime that called for not a little ingenuity, and placed slow-witted rustics under the frequent necessity of mopping from their brows the beads of perspiration that were caused by the unaccustomed exercise of their intelli-

gence. Two squares were cut out, one within the other, and crossed by two diagonal lines, holes being made at the angles. The players were each provided with nine stones or beans, as near black and white respectively as possible, and these they placed turn by turn in the holes, the object of each being to get three in a row and to prevent his opponent from accomplishing a like feat. When the pieces were all down they were moved alternately from one hole to the next, and when at last one of the players succeeded in placing three in a row, he had the satisfaction of capturing one of his adversary's 'men.' Those pieces that helped to form a run of three could not be taken, and the game ended when one of the players had confiscated a sufficient number of beans to make his opponent's victory impossible, or had arranged all his own in triplets. Shakespeare mentions the game in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream,' and it was still known as recently as the beginning of the present century in Warwickshire, where he had perhaps played it. It was then played on the corn-bins of stables or in empty barns, where the 'board' was chalked out in wet weather.

The pastime was evidently a favourite in Norfolk at about the same period, for a correspondent wrote to the genial Hone, the ever-eager repository for anything curious, relating a practical joke that was played on the champion of the district, who combined with pride in his skill at Nine Men's Morris a pious predilection for the singing of psalms. He was, it seems, waylaid as he was going to church by some unscrupulous jokers, who pretended to be disputing about some point in a game which they were wickedly enjoying on a Sunday morning in an empty house that stood by the wayside. When the champion appeared with his book under his arm he was asked to decide upon the disputed question, little suspecting that a wager was pending as to whether the charms of Nine Men's Morris would be sufficient to lure him from church. The worthy man hesitated and fell, and his depravity in playing at Nine Men's Morris throughout a Sunday morning doubtless formed a sufficient subject for rustic hilarity and chaff for many a day. It is fortunate that this game, which survived through so many ages, is not lost in oblivion as so many others have been.

One could wish that our ancestors had exercised some regard for the requirements of a curious posterity that is anxious to know how they amused themselves in their benighted days, if only for the purpose of making a favourable comparison between the present and the past. We should, then, at least have been

spared the need for conjecture in regard to many a quaintly named pastime that is familiarly mentioned—but without a word of explanation—by poets and others, who, if they thought about their future readers at all, gave them credit for more knowledge than they possess. Take Stool-ball, for instance; frequent references to it in Elizabethan literature attest its popularity; but there is not one that gives a clue to the manner in which it was

STOOL-BALL

played, the number of those who took part in it, or the rules of the game. That it called for the use of one or more stools in combination with a ball is pretty certain; but whether the players wielded the stools and struck the ball therewith, or whether the stools were used as wickets, which the players defended against the ball with their hands, is by no means clear. Perhaps it contained the germ of cricket, although the archæological researches of Mr. W. W. Read into the origin of

this game do not lead him to that conclusion in his recently published book.

There is some reason to believe that the ball was kept moving by being struck from one player to another with the seats of their stools. But in any case it is certain that a century or two ago, in some parts of the country, there flourished a lively bucolic sport which, if not the famous game of stool-ball itself, was at least played with the aid of stools, and consequently demands our attention. The stools were arranged in a ring, out of doors, and were occupied by lads and lasses seated a considerable distance apart. Someone struck a ball with his hand and sent it bounding over the sward, when immediately all the young men and maidens started up and began running from stool to stool, while the wight who had thrown the ball to the striker was speeding after it in the hope of regaining it in time to throw it at one of the players during his flight. If he did this successfully, he changed places with the player whom he hit.

Perhaps this is the pastime that was alluded to by D'Urfey in his comedy 'Don Quixote,' which delighted the playgoers of two hundred years ago—

> Down in a vale on a summer's day
> All the lads and lasses met to be merry,
> A match for kisses at stool-ball to play,
> And for cakes and ale, and cider and perry.
> Come all, great, small, short, tall,
> Away to stool-ball.

Another favourite amusement of which we have but meagre particulars was Hand-ball, which, judging from its title, was probably not very complicated, and perhaps is still being played every day by young people who are unaware that they are indulging in an ancient pastime. For some curious reason it was customary to play this game at Easter for tansy cakes, which, one would imagine, could hardly have been so tempting as to call forth strenuous efforts.

At Newcastle, indeed, so essential was hand-ball considered to the proper enjoyment of the Easter holidays that the Mayor and Corporation used to turn out in all their splendour to witness the pastime. How it was played, except that the ball was struck with the palm of the hand, which was probably protected, we do not know; but doubtless it had some exciting features to make it such a favourite. Certainly there was enough excitement introduced (though quite unexpectedly to the onlookers, at least) into a game that was being played by a daughter

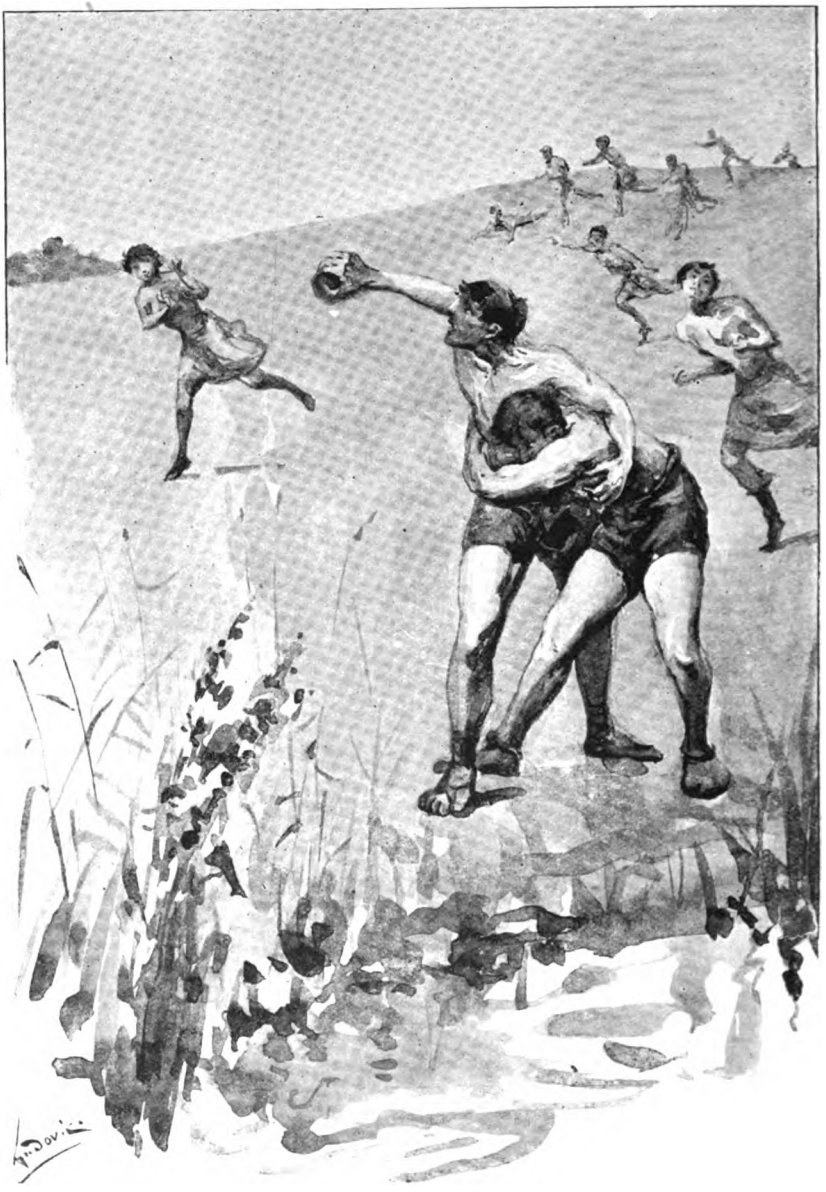
of a Mayor of Chester, when, if tradition is to be relied upon, she was suddenly carried off by an adventurous lover, who fled with her through Pepper's Gate. The Mayor, with tardy vigilance, thereupon caused the gate to be closed, thus giving rise to the local proverb, 'When the daughter is stolen, shut Pepper's Gate,' which recals a more familiar one connected with a horse and a stable door.

It has been suggested that the good old Cornish game of Hurling was a kind of hand-ball; but there was something so grand and typical of the hardihood of our ancestors about this West-country sport that it deserves to be placed in a different category. There were different methods of playing hurling; but, however practised, it was a pastime worthy of the gods, and those pessimists who see signs of deterioration in the English race can certainly find a peg upon which to hang their argument in the decay of a good old sport like this.

Hurling in East Cornwall was a very different affair from the same game as it was played in the west of the county. In the east the point of the game was to carry the ball through the goal. From fifteen to thirty champions appeared on either side, and having stripped themselves of nearly all their clothing, the two opposing teams faced each other in line. This brought each of the players in contact with his particular opponent, and it was the duty of these pairs of adversaries to devote particular attention to each other throughout the game. The antagonists joined hands, and took their places together in the field to await the throwing of the ball, which was done by a non-competitor. This was the signal for a struggle between all the opposing pairs, and the Cornishmen having been always celebrated for their wrestling, it may be conjectured that some pretty work was accomplished before one of the men freed himself from his adversary and captured the ball. A dart for the goal was quickly arrested, and the temporary possessor of the ball was permitted to thrust back his aggressor with his clenched fist, 'butting' him, as the term was, in the breast; but, being closely pressed and finding himself in danger of losing the ball, he hurled it back to one of his partners behind him who happened to be disengaged from his opponent. The rules did not permit the holder of the ball to throw it forward to a friend who might be between him and the opponent's goal. Other rules were, that only the player in possession of the ball was permitted to 'butt,' and that he could only be attacked by one man at a time.

Thus the sport went on, with many fluctuations of fortune,

until the goal was reached; and, the burly Cornishmen of Queen Bess's day not being particularly remarkable for the gentleness of



HURLING

their behaviour, accidents were not infrequent, sometimes of a serious nature.

In West Cornwall the game was more arduous still, for its severity was not mitigated by the rules that governed it at the opposite end of the shire. Two or three parishes would combine against two or three others, the match being made by the local gentry, who generally gave a silver ball as a prize, and their houses or the villages formed the goals, which were three or four miles apart. There was no matching of men nor comparing of numbers; but there were generally some fifty or even more lusty youths a side. The silver ball was thrown up, and a helter-skelter scrimmage immediately ensued, accompanied by cries of 'Ware east!' 'Ware west!' as those who observed the direction in which the ball was travelling shouted out the information to their partners. Over hill and dale, hedges and ditches, the contest continued; bushes and briars could not stop the players, and they hesitated not at ponds nor even rivers. Indeed, a highly respectable chronicler of the period assures us that there were sometimes twenty or thirty men struggling together in the water for the ball, which certainly deserved to be regarded as a well-earned trophy by those who eventually became its owners.

This form of the game was called 'Hurling to the Country,' while the pastime as previously described was termed 'Hurling to Goals.' The ball was about three inches in diameter, and was made of wood covered with a plate of silver on which some such motto was engraved as 'Fair play is good play.' Precision in throwing and dexterity in catching were particularly necessary for the game, as also were fleetness of foot and a talent for wrestling; so that it exercised an unusually large number of admirable and manly qualities.

Hurling to goals is said to have been played in the last century by parties of Irishmen in the pleasant fields that then existed about the neighbourhood of Bloomsbury. At that time an addition had been made to the game by the introduction of a kind of bat with which the players could scoop up the ball and strike it too, the instrument being flat at the sides and curved outward at the base, which was the broadest part. They would catch up the ball on the bat and run with it for some distance, sometimes tossing it in the air and catching it again, and, when assailed by danger, driving it back to their companions, who were ever prepared for its reception. This, like other forms of the game, is supposed to be of ancient date in England; but it is curious to reflect that the North American Indians were all the time playing something very like it in the sport that is now termed Lacrosse.

Of course, the amusements of our forefathers were by no means

confined to outdoor sports; but, unfortunately, a censorious posterity cannot acquit them of a tendency towards gambling in their indoor amusements. This venerable weakness, indeed, was not entirely absent from their open-air pastimes, the noble game of cricket itself having, as is very well known, been played up to a period almost within living memory for purses ranging from 100 to 1,000 guineas. But such popular games as cards, tables, backgammon, shovelboard, billiards, and even chess, provided a still more convenient vehicle for speculation, to the fascinations of which the so-called inferior sex were not the sole victims. There were, however, certain quaint and harmless games that were planned more as a source of hilarity and ingenuity than of excitement; and to one or two of these attention may be called.

RAGMAN'S ROLL

Ragman's Roll is one of the most curious. The game is said to have had a basis in the deed which acknowledged the dependence of the Scottish nobles and chieftains on the English crown: this document, when rolled up with a multitude of seals hanging

from it, having presented very much the sort of appearance that belonged to the Ragman's Roll. The amusement consisted in drawing out at a venture one of the strings to which the seals were attached, there being at the other end a slip of paper on

HOODMAN BLIND

which certain virtues and defects were humorously sketched, and these characteristics were applied to the person drawing the paper. This was, of course, read out to the amusement of the company assembled round the winter fireside, and each of them in their turn had to undergo a like ordeal. The preparation of the 'Roll' called for a good deal of ingenuity, and was in itself a great source of amusement. The characteristics of the company were hit off with good-natured witticism by one or more wags of the party, and the chance of the players drawing the scroll that was really intended for them added a tinge of excitement to the game. Naturally this did not often happen; but there was plentiful cause for laughter in the incongruity of a bashful maiden being provided with a character that would have suited her bibulous

uncle, and *vice versâ*, or of a grave matron finding herself described with the characteristics of her scapegrace nephew.

There were other forms of the amusement, in which roundels were introduced on the scrolls, and public characters were held up to ridicule. This game remained in vogue up to about the time

HOT-COCKLES

of Charles II., and did not entirely die out until a much later period.

Hoodman Blind, or, as it is now called, Blind Man's Buff, is a very old pastime that has been played both indoors and out from a remote time, the original name of the diversion having arisen from the custom of covering the head and face of the chief performer with the hood that formed a part of his attire. Hot-

cockles also served as a means of passing the winter evenings in the family circle long ago. The victim had to kneel down with his eyes covered and his face on the knees of another player. One of his hands was placed behind him, and it was struck or pinched by his companions until he guessed the name of one of his assailants, who then took his place. The game was also played by the countryfolk, and is described in a verse by the poet Gay:—

> As at hot-cockles once I laid me down,
> And felt the weighty hand of many a clown,
> Buxoma gave a gentle tap, and I
> Quick rose, and read soft mischief in her eye.

Several of the games of Old England have survived to this day, and many more have passed into oblivion; but there are not a few that, though now forgotten, might be revived to the advantage of an age that is continually seeking for fresh diversions.

ANECDOTES OF INDIAN SHOOTING

BY COLONEL H. WARD, C.I.E.

A LONG time ago, speaking of a book written by a friend of mine, 'Wild Men and Wild Beasts,' the 'Saturday Review' commented on the sameness of most books on Indian sport, and complained of the absence of variety. No doubt the bare chronicle of the deaths of, say, ten or twelve tigers would soon pall, for the circumstances attending the shooting of many must be more or less similar, although in all probability the incidents connected with each are exciting and varied enough to linger in the remembrance of the shikari himself for life. I will not, however, attempt to write an account of tiger shooting *per se*, but only give a few incidents that have befallen myself in a long life in India.

I was at one time stationed at Indore, a charming country within easy reach of the wildest parts of the Vindhya range, where game abounded in those days. These hills are mostly volcanic, and cannot compare in height or grandeur with the Himalayas; their highest peaks seldom touch 4,000 feet, while ordinarily they vary from 2,000 to 3,000 feet above sea level, but they are picturesque, and occasionally almost grotesque in shape and feature. Their formation of sandstone and trap lends itself wherever there is water to an abundant flora, so that the scenery, always wild, is varied, and occasionally very beautiful. Ferns abound, ranging from the smallest species of Adiantum to tree-ferns of all sizes, from three to twenty feet high; and here and there in some sheltered nook the shikari is surprised by a perfect dream of beauty in the midst of rugged and bare hillsides strewn with large boulders of black trap, looking as if they had been tossed about by primeval giants.

One such scene I will presently attempt to describe, though my skill in word-painting is not sufficient to enable me to do it

justice. The place will remain in my recollection as long as memory lasts.

The only inhabitants were aboriginals, in the stage between the hunter and agriculturist; men whose lives were one continual struggle with the feræ naturæ, and whose precarious subsistence hinged on the many and ingenious devices with which they could protect their few acres of rice and millet, sown either in the warm ashes of the jungle fires on the hillsides or in the valleys near water. Each patch of cultivation was fenced, and in every gap either a heavy figure-of-four fall trap large enough to kill a deer or even a panther was placed, or a bamboo sharpened at the end till it was like the blade of a spear was bent down over a deer's run and fastened with an ingenious device on bamboo fibres, so arranged that any animal coming into contact with it was speared by the bamboo as it flew back into position; or else, a live bamboo with a noose attached was bent down and fastened so as to spring back on the noose being drawn tight. To prevent an animal biting itself free, the fibres forming the noose were run through two or three short lengths of green bamboo; the cane selected for the noose was generally strong enough to lift the leg of the unfortunate animal caught, well off the ground, so that it was hardly capable of making any very violent effort to escape. The Bhils told me that even a tiger once caught in this noose had no chance of escape, and hung there till he died of starvation. I have never seen anything larger than a spotted deer so trapped, so cannot answer for the correctness of my information on this point.

The most effectual protection for their field is a stockade of sal (*Shorea robusta*) logs sunk into the ground, but this is only practicable in a sal forest. Where wood is scarce, the Bhil arranges another plan for scaring his enemies. Guns were few and far between; bows and arrows were of little use against bison, although the poison on the arrows (a decoction of the *Aconitum ferox*) was deadly if once it penetrated. When, therefore, the watchers reported bison in the vicinity of the green crop, the Bhils would calculate as nearly as they could where the animals would land on jumping the fence, and there they would bury a line, sometimes two lines, of broad-bladed spears, locally termed 'dansa,' standing about three feet out of the ground, with their points towards the fence; then they watched their opportunity, and drove the bison with shouts and yells on to the points. One was almost certain to be either killed or so severely wounded that he could easily be traced by his blood, and finished off, while others

would go off wounded. I was assured that the field was afterwards safe from that generation of bison at any rate.

Further to the east, where the Vindhyas and Sathpuras merge into one range, both wild buffalo and bison are still to be found in considerable numbers; but the people there told me they could never kill buffalo in this way, as their longer legs enabled them to get through the spears without a mortal wound; so other plans are adopted, for the buffalo are very destructive to green crops, and often will not be driven away, but hunt the badly armed watchers into trees. Some are caught in pitfalls, and once in Bastar I was shown the remains of thirteen which had been entrapped in a field surrounded by a stockade of sal logs; in anticipation of their visit, trees had been ingeniously arranged over the entrance, so that the watchers could let them fall across after the herd had passed in, and then every one perished miserably.

Many a lesson in woodcraft have I learned when sitting on a hillside waiting for the beaters to come on, with some old Bhil or Gōnd, whose stories of jungle life were both curious and entertaining, when once he had got over his shyness and found that I understood his language. It took time to gain their confidence, for though almost fearless in their own jungles, they are singularly timid with men of other race. A successful stalk was perhaps the surest way to their hearts. At the time I write of I had been out for some days, but had seen little game, when late in a March day, after walking for some distance along the course of a small stream running through rather an uninteresting plateau, suddenly I found myself on the very edge of a precipice with a sheer drop of some 400 or 500 feet; over this poured the little river, its thin volume of water lost in misty spray and blown into innumerable fantastic shapes before it reached the deep pool at the bottom of the gorge; the distance was blurred by the heat haze, so that it was impossible to see how far the ravine extended.

This was the Déokoh, or ravine of the gods, looking like a dark chasm running into the bowels of the earth—a weird and wild scene, regarded by the Bhils with superstitious awe, as populated by thousands of evil spirits. Looking down from above, with the afternoon sun throwing the cliffs into heavy shadow, it was easy to understand the awe of the Bhil, and it wanted little imagination to conjure up his evil spirits; in his mind it was an ideal place for a disaster, and until that day I had been quite unable to overcome the reluctance of the Bhils to show me the spot. I think, too, they would have refused at the very last had they not been

struck with admiration at a lucky shot made at a charging panther which fell dead at my feet; they thought then that they might count with certainty on my procuring for them a welcome addition to their food supply, by shooting some of those fabulous stag sambur with wonderful heads which were said to make their homes in these ravines, and at the same time protect them if we happened on a tiger on the same quest as ourselves—food. There was time to spare for a scramble down into this wild country

SHOT THROUGH THE HEART

below our feet, but I sat on, lost in admiring wonder, and even among the Bhils there seemed to be a singular reluctance to move, until one of them found the morning's track of a tiger leading down the hillside; then all was excitement. I was to take up a position in a narrow gorge, the only exit from the ravine, while the Bhils were to climb along the sides and hurl down stones from above.

I selected a lovely spot on the edge of the stream, where, hidden in a mass of *Osmunda regalis* and Jamun bushes

(*Syzigium Jambolanum*), I could see both sides without being seen. The tiger had gone elsewhere, but before I could even hear the beaters, a fine stag sambur, with splendid horns, came quietly along, listening intently every moment or two. About fifty yards from me he sank down in full view, and lay with his head low on the ground, ready to fly on the least alarm. It was almost the best opportunity I have ever had of watching the ways of one of these splendid elks. So close, that I could see his every movement, I knew that if there was a tiger or a panther in the ravine the stag would be the first to warn me. I had, therefore, nothing to do but to watch him. He occasionally moved one of his large, widespread ears, formed to catch the smallest sound, otherwise he never stirred until the men came over the hill right above him; then he sprang to his feet to bound off, but fell dead, shot through the heart. While the stag was being broken up I wandered up the stream, admiring the ferns and flowers, but just as I reached a lovely avenue of tree-ferns, some of them fifteen or twenty feet high, on either side of the water, the men hurried me away, begging me to get clear of the ravine and its evil spirits before darkness fell, and it was already late. I had to be content with their promise to spend the next day among the ravines, when I was to be shown some curious old caves, in which, in former days, people used to take refuge from the raids of the Mahrattas; of late years they were more visited by tigers and bears than by men.

Daylight found me on the brow of the hill, and I watched the sun as it rose over the low country and gilded each of the peaks of the hills, while it touched with brightness the wreaths of mist into which the waterfall had developed, and the occasional clouds which floated up from the plains below. Too early for the heat haze to intervene, the day was clear and bright, and the view magnificent; far in the distance I could see here and there a silver streak marking the course of some small stream winding its way to the Nerbada River through extensive forests, in which an occasional clearing showed where Bhils or Gōnds had made themselves a village. Even the deep chasm beneath me no longer looked weird and mournful, as it appeared in the grey light of the evening before, but was bright and fresh. Again I could have sat on, lost in admiration of the beauties of nature, had not the people become excited over the track of another tiger, which, however, the little piles of earth raised in the footprints by the earthworms showed had passed down very early in the night. Once the move was made we scrambled down and found the way

to the caves was barred by jungle fires, the ashes and débris of which were still warm and smoking. While the men consulted I wandered away alone up a small stream, on either side of which the grass had been burnt, leaving a fine grey ash spread over the ground. In this I found the footprints—perfectly fresh—of a large tiger, which had evidently been only just disturbed, probably by us. Following very cautiously I presently saw the tiger about fifty yards in front of me, walking slowly along among the bamboos; he neither saw nor heard me, and seemed to suspect nothing. I followed silently until I saw him dip into

THE BRUTE'S JAWS WERE CLOSE TO THE MUZZLE OF MY RIFLE

another small ravine, then I ran back and sent the men round to drive him towards me. There was no large tree available, so I laid down on a flat rock, with a sloping bank to my left, and on the right a clear space about eight yards wide to the side of the hill, which rose in a perfectly straight scarp. I hoped the tiger would come to the left below me; he did not, and I watched him from sixty yards off walk calmly towards me on my right. He would have passed within six feet of me had I left him alone, but every moment I thought he would hear the beating of my heart, so when eight or ten yards off I fired, and as the smoke cleared I saw the brute's jaws apparently close to the muzzle of my rifle.

To pull the trigger, drop the rifle, turn heels over head down the bank, and spring up the nearest small tree was the work of a few seconds; and there I clung on, recovering my breath and wondering whether I was alive, until a Bhil from above shouted that the tiger was dead. He was half on the rock where I had been, shot through the heart, and the hair on his face burnt with the flash of the second barrel. He was a magnificent old male, one of the largest I have killed.

In the next three days I shot two more tigers, and ought to have got another. But I am not going to say anything more about them.

I met the charging panther spoken of on a previous page late one evening when returning to camp after an unsuccessful day. Walking through low scrub jungle almost bare of leaf, with an occasional tree here and there, I suddenly realised that in the fork of a tree about ten feet from the ground a panther was couched looking at me. As his eye caught mine he bounded down before I could raise the rifle, and I only got a snap-shot as he went off, hitting him, but it was too dark to see to follow. In the fork of the tree were the remains of a young neilgae, which evidently the panther had killed early in the day, eaten what he could, and then dragged the rest up the tree, so as to be out of the way of vultures and jackals.

The next morning I took up the blood trail, and about fifty yards off found the panther under a bush not big enough to hide a hare, yet neither I nor my men had seen him until we were all but on him; one step more and he must have sprung on one of us, when my lucky shot caught him between the eyes.

Panthers are nasty, uncertain brutes, and can hide in no cover; as a rule they will attack you, but while I have seen some charge home without provocation, I have seen an occasional one run like a beaten dog; nothing would make him fight. Twice I have seen them, when wounded, charge almost within springing distance and then stop. One of these two sat down on his haunches within five yards of me and roared while I reloaded; he had been seen in a cave at the top of a small hill, and the men said he could be shot as he laid. Colonel C—— watched the entrance of the cave while I climbed the hill, and then saw the panther through a cleft shelving in the centre, so that I could not fire without hitting the rock. We tried to tempt the beast out by shaking a turban in front of the mouth of the cave; all he would do was to put out one foreleg. I sent a bullet through this, hoping to stop him with the second barrel as he went off, but

the pace was too good, and I missed him; so did Colonel C—— from below. I was not quite sure which was the most dangerous, for the Colonel's bullets whizzed about pretty freely among the rocks, but after emptying my two rifles, the panther suddenly appeared on the top of the rock twenty yards off, and came straight for me. I hurried up my reloading; fortunately no one moved, and when some four or five yards distant the panther sat down and roared, until I shot him dead.

I then found the path to his cave led almost from where I was standing, through a narrow cleft in the rocks, so I fancy he was as much surprised as I was. My introduction to Colonel C—— was peculiar. The day he reached my camp, having ridden forty miles from Mhow, I found him lying under a mango tree on his back, with his arm attached to a rope passed through a block, which was securely fastened to a branch; two Syces were hauling at this, and presently Colonel C—— explained that his horse had fallen close to camp and put his shoulder out; he was having it pulled into place again. He constantly suffered in the same way, and always carried his block and pulley about with him.

On the other occasion when the panther charged, the cartridge jammed and I could neither get it in nor out; he did not, however, come home, or wait till I could get another rifle, but made off with a broken shoulder, and I never saw him again. Panthers slink away and hide so easily that many escape without being fired at. I have killed many more tigers than panthers, though the latter are certainly the more numerous of the two.

For my sins I once had to spend a rainy season in a hut in Kalahandi, one of the small Feudatory States in the wild district of Sambalpur, about 180 miles from anywhere. There had been a rising among the Khōnd population, and I was sent with a force to suppress it; it was singularly disagreeable work, and we all lived in wretched discomfort.

We had occasional alarms of panthers and tigers prowling about our huts; scorpions and snakes were too common to notice. I picked up one very beautiful tree-snake of a brilliant green colour, which I had not seen before, and many rare spiders, but there was so much work I had little time to spare for natural history. One morning a cow was killed close by. Beaters were collected and the guns were posted, most of us in trees; Colonel B—— said it was too much trouble to climb a tree, so he seated himself on an ordinary chair on the ground with a sepoy by him. The day was hot, there was some little delay, but directly the beat

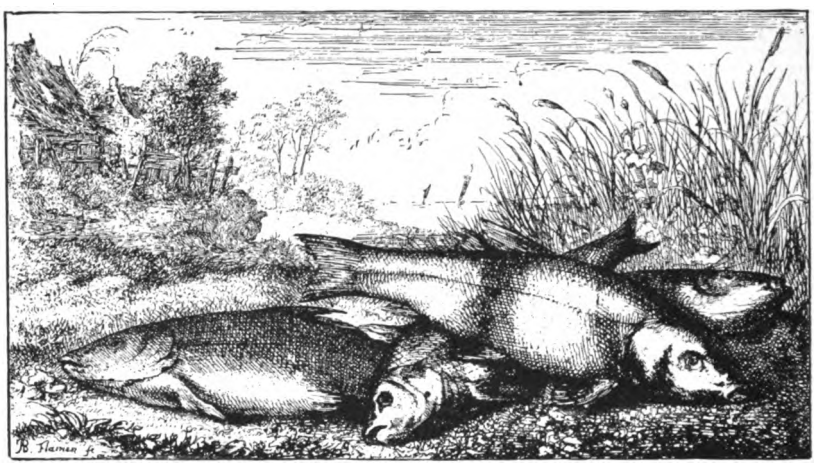
began I heard the footstep of a heavy animal between myself and Colonel B——, and then a jump. I waited for the shot, but none came, and in a few minutes a voice called out, 'Stop the beat, the tiger has gone.' I soon found that the tiger had walked past, about fifteen yards from my friend's chair, and then jumped a small watercourse behind. Both he and his orderly were quietly asleep!

We changed our position and beat the hill the tiger had gone into. This time he came to me and was killed; he had a very handsome skin, but I could not preserve it owing to the rains.

In September I rode back to Raipur. There was fortunately a break in the rains, but I travelled too fast to carry tents, and used to rest for the night in the grass huts which had been put up for the postal runners, and they gave bare shelter. About half way, near the Jōnk River, I was met by an old Gōnd shikari who had been out a good deal with me in better times; he pointed silently to the footprint of a huge bull buffalo in the middle of my path, evidently quite fresh. The track led parallel to my road, so I dismounted, took the rifle, and signed to the old man to lead on. After following for half a mile, the Gōnd stopped, slipped behind me, and, pointing to a belt of sal forest about eighty yards in front, said, 'Come away, sahib, I know him well.' This did not quite suit me; the foliage was very luxuriant, and it was most difficult to make out even a large animal among the leaves, so I declined to move, and reconnoitred with the field-glasses. I then made out a large bull buffalo with only one horn. He, too, saw and heard us, and began pawing and tossing up the ground, uttering a low, deep bellow. The old Gōnd was by this time grovelling at my feet, and said that the bull had killed three men within the last month or two. I could not get a broadside shot, and the distance was too great for certainty. Time pressed, as I had still many miles to go, so I suggested to my old friend that he should draw the bull by running across the small glade where we were standing, and climbing up a tree on the other side, which had branches hanging conveniently low down. He said it was quite impossible, and meant certain death to him. I then said that we must both retire together; that, too, was certain death—to one or both. However, he presently saw that to climb the tree was the lesser of the two evils, as I should check the bull's charge; so, mustering his courage, and telling me with his last words that he was going to his death, he ran across, yelling. He had not twenty yards to go, while the bull had at least eighty, but the brute had evidently been waiting for someone to run, and came out with a rush at

CRASHING THROUGH THE JUNGLE LIKE A TRACTION ENGINE LET LOOSE

the first shout; the old man was up his tree like a monkey, well before the bull passed me at a gallop, about eight yards off. I shot him clean through the heart, but the impetus of his rush carried him on for about one hundred yards, crashing through the jungle like a traction engine let loose, till he fell dead against a tall tree, which quivered to the very top. We were both glad to be over that business. An old solitary bull is a nasty beast; most buffaloes run away if they can, or only charge when hit. A solitary is not to be trusted, and occasionally attacks anyone he meets. He is a difficult beast to stop with a ·500 express, when coming straight for you with his head well down. I believe the old Gōnd was quite as much frightened on my account as on his own.



HOOKS AND I

BY THE MARQUESS OF GRANBY

THE word 'hooks' 'surprises in himself,' as Count Smorltork would observe, one of the most vexed and discussed of angling questions: so many men having so many ideas respecting the best sizes to use, whether for fly or bottom fishing. There are round bends and Limerick bends, 'sneck' bends and a dozen other kinds, all of which have their believers and followers. Then, nowadays, when in fly fishing for trout or grayling eyed hooks are almost invariably used, there always exists much argument touching the relative values of 'turned-up,' 'straight,' or 'turned-down' eyes.

TURNED-UP EYE STRAIGHT EYE TURNED-DOWN EYE

One admirable fisherman will assure you that on most occasions the big trout of the southern streams will only rise at flies tied on 000 hooks; whereas the next man you come across, an equally succcessful and scientific angler, will stoutly and persistently aver that the use of such minute attractions is not

only unnecessary but unwise; and that flies tied on hooks two or three sizes larger are fully as efficacious as their tinier brethren.

Again, some pin their faith on a hook placed in the head of the fly, thus

FLY WITH HOOK PLACED IN THE HEAD

DITTO WITH TURNED-DOWN EYE

and confidently assert that fewer fish are 'missed' by this means than when the ordinary hook is employed.

As a matter of fact, however, I cannot help thinking that in this, as in many other affairs of life, Belief—with a big B—goes a long way. A man will fish more keenly, more perseveringly, and more accurately, when in possession of his favourite tackle, than when through some accident he is obliged to use flies of a size and make in which he does not *quite* believe. Should anything go wrong—a series of 'short' rises; fish just touched and escaping; gut 'giving' when entangled in weeds, grass, trees, or water-plants; or any of the thousand and one *contretemps* occur which aggravate the fisherman, but also tend to make him still more determined to secure a full basket, that is, supposing he be a true and tried member of the confraternity of anglers—then he is apt to say, 'Just as I thought; it's these inf—— I mean blessed midge flies; of course, they are no use;' or, 'How I loathe these narrow bend hooks! no human being *can* kill fish with them;' or, 'There goes that old idiot's cast again; I always said it was the rottenest stuff in Europe;' whereas in all probability the same thing would have happened had the most treasured flies and best beloved brand of gut been employed. Mr. Jerome has told us how a young man who came across a copy of a standard medical work carefully studied the same; and being somewhat nervous at the time, finally concluded that he combined in his own person every known disease except housemaid's knee, and was almost grieved that he could not include that also in the category of his ailments.

This, it will be observed, resulted from Belief. In the same way, when fishing with tackle on which full reliance is not placed, people are prone to get flurried, to put all the blame of their misfortunes on the materials they are using, and in consequence fail

egregiously. But it would seem that, as the immortal Mulvaney says, 'I am digresshin;' the hook is just now the point, and indeed very often it possesses one that is brought sharply to the angler's notice.

While on this branch of the subject, let me relate a little incident which occurred some few years ago, in the days when trout flies were always tied on gut, and eyed hooks were not. A friend of mine, a capital fisherman, was, *more suo*, during an early spring day looking over his stock of old flies, selecting and testing those which appeared likely to be of use in the coming season.

He was moistening in his mouth the gut on a fly tied on a very short length, when by some slight movement it slipped and slid gently towards the back of his throat, where the hook stuck. He tried to dislodge it with his fingers but failed; and as a March Brown in one's gullet is presumably an uncomfortable matter, he rang the adjacent bell to summon his faithful henchman, to get him to abstract the foreign body from its resting-place. The bell was answered, but owing to the circumstances of the case, intelligible speech on the part of the sufferer was impossible, and my friend could only lean back in his chair, open his mouth, grunt, and point to his throat. Seeing his master in such an unusual position, and apparently unable to do more than utter incoherent and vague sounds, the servant was at first horrified and imagined madness; but on reflection came to the conclusion that the harsh spring winds then blowing through the London streets had suddenly affected his larynx, and that he was signing for something to soothe his trouble. He, therefore, hurried away to bring the most effective relief he could think of, which proved to be a strong whisky-and-soda. It took some time and much gesticulation to make the servant understand what he was expected to do, but eventually a pair of pliers solved the difficulty, and the fly was safely withdrawn from its strange abode. There is no authentic record of the language used when speech was at length practicable, but this little tale shows in what strange vagaries flies and hooks at times indulge.

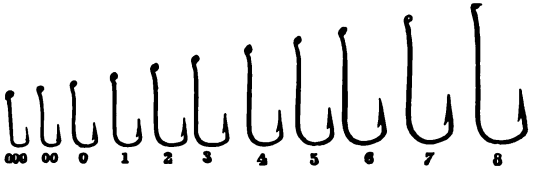
But for one moment let me return to the 'Belief' theory. Only the other day I had somewhat of a shock on this head.

I was vainly trying to induce certain small grayling to rise, and could find nothing to tempt them with, when the keeper discovered in his book a very tiny 'Apple green.' I put it on, and for the next five minutes rose a fish at every cast, but never a one would catch hold. Now mark! it was not one of *my own* flies that I was using.

I turned to the keeper, and asked how on earth anyone could hook fish on such a midge fly, and so on.

In despair I again rummaged in my fly box, and eventually found one more 'Apple green,' at least two sizes larger than the one in use. At once it was attached to the cast, and joyfully I exclaimed 'Now we shall see!' We *did*. For the fish went through exactly the same performance as with the smaller fly, and not a single one could I get fairly hold of—thus, at any rate, proving conclusively it was not the size of the hook which was the reason of my lack of success.

Although on occasions such as the above the size of the hook does not much signify, there are, nevertheless, many others on which it is of primary importance. I cannot believe that the difference between, say, an 0 and a 00 trout hook is sufficient to make or mar the success of a day's fishing. It will be seen from the sketch below that the alteration in size is so very slight as to be almost imperceptible, and in nine out of ten cases a change from the one to the other would be a waste of time.



DIFFERENT SIZES OF TROUT-HOOKS

But when you begin work with a fly tied on a No. 2 or 3 hook, and find that, although fish are 'moving,' they are coming 'short,' then you had better try a smaller fly of the same pattern, and very probably you will be rewarded for your trouble.

In the case of salmon flies, the varieties of size are so marked as to be easy of understanding; and everyone who has wielded a salmon rod must appreciate the value and necessity of learning whether a large, medium, or small fly is most likely to be effective in the then state of the river which he is fishing.

In fact, it is to me rather a moot point whether it is the colour or size of fly which deserves most consideration when in pursuit of *salmo salar*.

By the way, what a comfort it is to find the water in proper order, and not in a condition compelling one to hurl a 3-inch hook smothered in tinsel and feathers into the teeth of a heavy gale! Many and heavy fish may then be killed; but it is a tiring operation and one not altogether free from anxieties. For a fly of this magnitude, if it *does* get hold of one anywhere, as these

giants are apt to do occasionally when a strong wind prevails, is not a subject for jest.

Hooks *are* contrary things, as every fisherman knows. They seem to have many evil habits welded into them during their construction. They break, the barbs 'go,' they 'open,' and always behave thus at the most critical moments, just when the only really good fish of the day has been risen and hooked. Moreover, they are so inquisitive in their ways.

If a hook, however small, is given the faintest chance it will silently and unostentatiously take firm hold of some portion of one's clothing, generally in the most inconvenient place.

When moving from one part of a river to another, I always take great pains to fasten my trout fly to a small ring on the butt of the rod, but even then it—the fly, I mean—often eludes my vigilance, seizes me, and woe and 'strange oaths' are the consequences.

Can anyone explain *why* a hook should, nine times out of ten, select the back of the right shoulder, or the centre of the spine, as its temporary resting-place? or *why*, in extreme cases, even more ungetatable regions?

I have seen a brother angler, apparently attacked by the staggers, revolving wildly round and round by the river-side, holding his rod tightly over one shoulder, while with his right hand he grasped frantically at the lower regions of his back. This process seemingly affording him no relief, he was forced to sit down, divest himself of his nether garments, and then and only then could he reach the seat of his troubles and the cause thereof. Need I add that it was the HOOK, which had selected what our American friends call, I believe, the 'western' portion of his frame as its object of attack! Now, occurrences such as these are wearing, not only to the temper, but to the clothes. However, they are not *always* happening, and when they do must be accepted as part of the luck of the day, the angling equivalent to the 'rub of the green' in golf.

Again, on some days a hook seems to possess an unholy attraction for everything in nature except fish. Should a fragment of green scum separate itself from the tufa in the river bed, the fly secures it. Every flag, every water-weed, flower, or floating object, is caught by it; the only daisy for twenty yards round in the field behind you solicits, and obtains, its embrace; while in salmon fishing when the leaves begin to fall, and thickly bestrew the river, then the hook has a grand chance, of which it generally takes full advantage by picking out of the water every

possible leaf at incredible distances from the unfortunate fisherman.

At other times hooks seem to be seized with still stranger forms of aberration.

Most people who have fished much have, on some occasion or other, when in the act of throwing their fly, found that a swallow has swooped at it, and become firmly caught. Bats have been known to hook themselves, while domestic fowls—most prying birds when not alarmed—have frequently stalked a fisherman and paid the penalty of a firm attachment.

Sometimes, indeed, there happen even odder incidents of this kind. One day this year an eager angler was fishing a very clear and usually productive pool on a Derbyshire river.

Keenly intent on killing a fish, he was kneeling by the stream and steadily casting, when a large posse of small pigs, who had been watching with much interest his proceedings from a distance, quietly approached him.

As they came from behind, and were, for pigs, abnormally silent, he did not notice their advent, but went on absorbedly with his fishing. Just as he was in the act of making his best cast, which was to be placed to an inch over a rising fish, a fierce jerk was felt from the direction of the field in his rear, and a wild yell heard. Up jumped the fisherman, fearing the worst, possibly fancying that the hill tribes of those parts had suddenly combined in some new sort of raid, to find that he had tight hold of the most adventurous of the young porkers. Then ensued a scene of disorder and riot. The damaged pig fled screaming, the rest of the herd joined in, and all rushed madly across the bridge in the direction of their home, followed by the furious piscator with bent rod and a reel which shrieked and ran also. Naturally the end came quickly in the shape of a snapped casting-line and a wounded temper, and there was nothing for it but to repair breakages and begin again. But what became of and will happen to that fly? Is it still in the pig's skin, and will it remain there firmly embedded?

I have known, too, a case of a lamb which had as much curiosity as this pig. The incident has, by the way, appeared in print before, I believe, but I can't help that. This lamb bent an inquisitive nose over a cast which had been carefully made up and placed in the grass by the side of an angler, who then busied him with some other tackle arrangement. While this operation was proceeding, the hook of the fly firmly hitched itself into the lamb's wool, and when the animal moved off, naturally the fly

moved too. A prolonged search for the casting-line of course resulted in failure, till an intelligent attendant, who had remarked the lamb's inquiring frame of mind, thought of seeing if the missing link were anywhere about the animal's body. He eventually discovered the cause of the mysterious disappearance, but by then it was too late to save the treasured cast.

All these are, nevertheless, but minor evils, for occasions arise when a fly, driven by an extra heavy gust of wind, penetrates deep into the lobe of a fisherman's ear, and has to be cut out.

I have also seen a hook fasten into the nostril of a fisherman, which was anything but a laughing affair.

The subject of these temporary attachments brings me to a question always of deep interest to the opposite sex—namely, that of dress.

Indeed, indirectly, the whole bearing of this article should touch nearly our fair friends. For with a very slight alteration in the spelling, the title must, of necessity, appeal to their feelings. Just now, however, it is with the habiliments of men in their relation to fishing requirements that I must deal. It is, of course, much pleasanter to fish, at any rate when the weather is warm, clad in some thin, open-textured material, than it is in a closely-grained, hard tweed.

But like many another pleasant thing, in the long run it is not quite so satisfactory in its results, for the harder and less sympathetic cloth resists more easily the undue advances made to it by a hook, the fluffy surface of the lighter homespun or Harris stuff always attracting the fly in a wondrous and uncanny fashion.

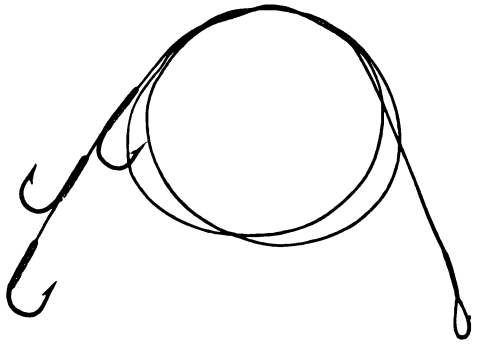
In fact, in every phase of its existence, a hook, like a woman, requires to be humoured, though sometimes, do what you will, it goes wrong.

No doubt, since the introduction of eyed hooks, matters have been easier for the fisherman. Fewer casts are now used with three or four flies on them, and, naturally, fewer entanglements occur. What an endless nuisance it used to be when one or two of the drop flies tied their heads up in a neat knot and then carefully climbed over the casting-line itself! Not only did their manœuvre entail laborious unravelling of the erring flies themselves, but it gave a fair opening to the other flies on the cast to get hopelessly jumbled up as well, with the usual result of ten minutes wasted in vain efforts at disentanglement, and possibly a general and complete breaking off of the whole casting-line.

So many more people now fish with a single fly, 'dry,'

up-stream, than used to do ten years ago, that a long cast with two or more flies on it is becoming somewhat of a rarity. This latter plan is, however, still sometimes employed in Derbyshire and elsewhere, especially during the grayling season, and often with much success, while in the quicker and rougher Scotch rivers a down-stream fisherman, who deftly throws a long line with sundry flies on it, secures many a good basketful.

But even in Scotland 'up-stream' fishing is rapidly becoming well known, and in rivers such as the Don and the Deveron, probably more fish—I am, of course, alluding to trout—have of late years been killed by this method than by the older one of down-stream casting. Mention of the rivers above referred to leads me to leave for one moment the subject of the more legitimate branch of fishing, and to refer to one which I fancy attracts those who have made a study of it almost as much as dry-fly work itself; I allude to the use of the 'Stewart tackle.'

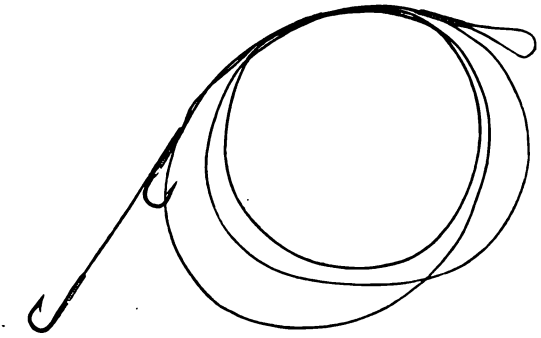


'STEWART TACKLE' FITTED WITH THREE HOOKS

The quantity of good trout which have by this means been accounted for on certain lengths of many Scotch streams is very great. Moreover, the Stewart tackle, if properly managed, demands nearly as much skill as dry-fly fishing. The finest of tackle—no shot being used—the most attractive, best scoured and hardened of worms, small hooks, and the sharpest of eyes (I mean organs of vision, not those on the hooks) are required to obtain a good day's sport. Careful wading up the shallows, using a stiffish rod, with many precautions against the danger of an undue splash occurring when the cast is made, and the most vigilant observation of the line so as to notice its slightest check, in order that an instant 'strike' may be made, are amongst the numerous points requiring rigorous attention. And as in addition to the undoubted pleasure which this form of fishing

affords, and the amount of skill necessary to successfully enjoy it—the early summer when the sun is shining is perhaps the best time of year in which it is most profitably pursued—it will be at once seen that the hook, when employed on a 'Stewart tackle,' is capable of rendering much enjoyment and excellent sport.

I do not here propose to say anything with regard to the relative merits of this kind of tackle when fitted with three hooks, or with only two. Here, again, the Belief theory obtains, and each angler must decide this point for himself. I would only add that pretty nearly the same advice applies to him who would successfully use Stewart tackle as to the dry-fly fisherman: viz. fish as 'fine,' as continuously, and as quietly as possible. Then will good fortune attend his efforts, and great store of big trout enrich his basket.



'STEWART TACKLE' FITTED WITH TWO HOOKS

Undoubtedly at times hooks seem determined to act 'contrariwise;' but then, again, there come those days when everything goes preternaturally well, and they attend strictly and satisfactorily to their legitimate business.

After all, what would life be without fishing, and what would fishing be without hooks? Fancy being compelled always to net or spear. Fearful thought!

So let us forget the temporary irritations and vexations which sometimes occur, and find our peaceful entertainment in some such quiet spot as did Mr. Jo. Chalkhill:

Where in a brook,
With a hook,
Or a lake,
Fish we take;
There we sit
For a bit,
Till we fish entangle.

NIGHTS WITH AN OLD GUNNER

BY C. J. CORNISH

On the jut of the Norfolk coast which runs due east from Hunstanton to Cromer is a tract of shore unlike any other on the English seaboard. From Holkham Bay to Blakeney Tower the land has, in the course of a few centuries, gained as much from the shallow Northern sea as it has lost where the coast once more faces eastward. In place of lost towns and submerged churches, there extends, as far as the eye can reach, a wide fringe of salt-marsh, protected from the sea, first by an ever-growing barrier of sandhills, and, secondly, by an outwork known as the 'High Sand,' an immense sandbank, rising like the back of a sole, uncovered, except at high tide, studded from mile to mile with ancient wrecks, and the nightly resting place of the celebrated wild grey geese of Holkham, which come there yearly in October from the Lapland marshes 'to pay their rents,' as the fishermen say, for last year's food and lodging. The inner tract of marsh, between the sandhills and the original line of shore, has been reclaimed along the whole face of the Holkham estate, as far as the mouth of Wells Harbour. Thence it stretches eastward in an apparently limitless plain, not of mud or sand, but of land almost reclaimed by nature, covered with thousands of acres of sea-lavender, crab-grass, rosemary, and samphire, intersected by creeks large and small, which figure on the map much as the arteries of the body do in an anatomical drawing, and cut by one

or two deeper channels, running up from Wells Harbour, which are navigable by boats at high tide. The high springs, or 'marsh tides,' as they are locally called, cover these flats twice or thrice a month. But the whole expanse offers a feeding ground and resting place for wildfowl almost unequalled in England. The sands and the muds outside the sandhills are visited in winter by thousands of stints, knots, curlews, and grey plover, and the marshes inside the 'hills' are by night the feeding ground of all the wildfowl which rest by day on Holkham Lake, while redshanks, green plover, golden plover, and curlew haunt them at all hours.

It can scarcely be matter for surprise that these marshes, which are so attractive even to the stranger who visits them for the sake of sport or natural history, are regarded with an almost passionate attachment by the old 'gunners' who have spent all their lives upon their borders. They eagerly welcome the chance of a whole day upon the marshes as an agreeable change from their daily work of mussel and cockle fishing, and their keenness to do the honours of their native marsh to a stranger is as great as that of any great proprietor to show sport to his guests in his fields and covers.

The writer's last visit to this delectable land was made with the object of seeing, and perhaps shooting, some of the wild geese on their morning and evening flight from and to the great sandbank. For guide and attendant he had an old 'gunner' who by general consent had a more intimate knowledge of the methods and history of wildfowling in these marshes, and of the habits of the creatures which frequent them, than any man now living upon this coast. His back was bent from long nights spent sitting in 'duck-holes.' He knew the effect of every shift of wind and weather on the fowl, the devious ways and paths across the marshes, and the hours at which the creeks could be crossed at all states of the tide. His keenness for the sport was inexhaustible, as the following anecdote shows. He is an adept at 'calling' the different shore birds, and in the earlier part of the season can whistle single golden plovers and curlew down from the sky with an art which looks like magic. On one occasion in September he called a single golden plover, which descended from a great height and alighted within twenty yards of a party who were lunching in the sandhills. But he was so unfortunate as to lose a front tooth, and found that he could 'whistle' the birds no longer. This was not to be borne, so he extracted (with his knife) the corresponding lower tooth, in the hope that he would

On one Occasion he called a single Golden Plover

whistle as well as ever if he 'made things ship-shape.' The result of this experiment was that he could not whistle at all. So he contrived a 'stopper' of tin which could be adjusted to fill the gap, and, thus equipped, found that he could once more practise his lost art.

Our 'wild-goose chase' presented more than the usual difficulties. At night they flew back too high over the sandhills for a successful shot. In the early mornings the winds were light and adverse, and the weather clear. But, like Charles St. John's keeper Donald, the old man had set his heart upon our shooting a goose, and was determined that no slackness on our part should be encouraged.

Each night he appeared, nominally for orders, really to give them, and then discoursed in fluent East Anglian phrase on the whole duty of the wildfowler.

'I ha' brought some swan-shot up to load a few of your cartridges for them geese we're a-going after in the morning,' he would observe, on entering the inn parlour after dinner had been removed.

'Oh, we are going after them, are we?' the writer would answer, half in inquiry, half in resignation.

'You *must*; can't you hear the wind? That's blowing half a gale from the west'ard, and them old geese, when they come o' the morning, they're bound to fly low. I lay a penny they'll come straight in past the beacon, and in over them highest sandhills. That's where we're bound to be afore light if the wind don't shift. Like as not that'll blow harder then. You'll come all the same if that snow or rain? Then I'll call you at half-past five. Dark? no; that o'ont be dark—not dark enough to si'nify. That's never rightly dark unless there come on a thick' (a fog). 'Moonlight nights on the marshes, I've known when that looked as light as day. But that isn't. I never cared what time that was when I was out, whether that was day or whether that was night; and I've set out in "duck-holes" all hours and all weathers. But moonlight nights are the curousest. The birds can see; you can't see, or not a quarter so much, or see things wrong; and though they can see everything else, there is just one thing they can't see, and that's *you*. Anyway, if you keep still they don't pay no regard to you—not no more than if you was a piece o' wreck—not so much sometimes, for they'll a'most walk over you.

'I was setten one night in a "duck-hole" near where that

goose-net[1] stands, just off the hills. That was bright moonlight, half-full. Two stints come flying along over the mud, and lit down against me, on the edge of the hole, and I catched one with my hand.

'I said to the man who was with me, setten, in another hole close by, "Gracious heart now me, what do you think I done? I catched a stint with my hand, and very near had the other!"

'When we dig a duck-hole that fare as if the birds like to come and see what it is, and often they won't mind you a mite—not if you keep setten still. When you dig one of them holes, you go and gather two or three armfuls of marrum-grass, and put that in the hole to set on, and be comfortable and dry. When I've been set there I've had an old owl[2] pitch in by me and stop so, pricked up upon the marrum. So I have seen them when first I come to the hole, setting pricked up upon the seat where I was agoing to sit. Old brent geese, too, will get into the holes, and set on the dry marrum where you laid it.

'One night I had forty or fifty of the grey geese come walking and talking within twenty yards of me. They were all scattered about, not arranged anyhow so as I could shoot along the "ringe," and I kept waiting till they got nearly too far to shoot. Then I only got a couple.

'Moonlight nights I was waiting for them knot,[3] when a brace of widgeon dropped right into the hole where I sat. *They* didn't stop to shut the door before they were off! Another night I found the hole I had dug was full of water, so I made another alongside of it. While I sat there two mallards flew up behind me, and dropped slap into the water-logged hole that was a little behind me, and I had to turn round to shoot. My heart went thump! thump! thump! as I waited for them to come out of the hole, for the water wasn't up to the top, and I couldn't see *them*, and they were so close under the side that they couldn't see *me*.

'At last I crawled out, and up they got, but I never killed but one.

[1] Lines of netting are set up on the sand to catch the geese. At first they were very successful. Now the birds avoid them, and few are caught. The price of wild geese when the nets were first set fell to 2*s*. 6*d*. apiece. The geese have grown scarce, but the price has not risen. So much for political economy and prices.

[2] Short-eared owls, which are very common along the marshes and sandhills, where they alight after their flight across the North Sea.

[3] Great flocks of knots gather on the sands between Wells and Blakeney. They were Canute's favourite dish. He may have got them from Wells, a Danish settlement.

'Old Jimmy Catchpole and I sat out one very sharp night by the edge of the long sand. The tide was too high to dig a deep hole, but Jimmy scraped out a "laying-hole," and lay there on his back, just so as his head and body were level with the sand, but his feet and legs lay out. He allus swear an old mallard drake come and washed the'self and cleaned the'self between his two feet. That night, while I lay there on my back, a mallard come walking past me not four yards off. I had the gun lying with the muzzle resting on my toe[1] down along my leg. Thinks I, "I'll take yar head off," for that was too near to shoot it anyhow else. I fired, and that lay on the ground. But when I come to pick it up, it wasn't touched by the shot, though it

FORTY OR FIFTY GREY GEESE CAME WITHIN TWENTY YARDS OF ME

was as dead as a herring. Not a drop of blood anywhere. That must have been killed by the wind of the charge just over its head.

'Well, while I ha' been talking I ha' filled these dozen cartridges with swan shot, and these others with BB; and if we don't kill one of them old grey geese in the morning they'll have sore bones anyhow.'

Punctually at half-past five next morning the rattle of gravel against the window aroused us from bed, and a brief interval saw us tramping by starlight over muddy roads towards the sands

[1] This, though apparently an awkward pose, is the orthodox attitude when lying-up for fowl in the open. It is also used by the Boers when shooting buck on the Veldt.

of Holkham Bay. As the dawn cleared the way for daylight across the marsh the geese came in in lines and companies from the High Sand. Flock after flock passed over, with steady even flight and flute-like calls. But the gale had dropped, the lightening sky was cloudless, and though our shot could be heard rattling on the feathers of the geese, the elastic cuirass of down saved them from injury. We were consoled by the beauty of the dawn on the marshes, and the walk home in the fresh winter morning between the sandhills and the sea. Not so our guide. He felt that his reputation was at stake. In the evening he once more appeared, to urge us to further enterprise by tales of the shore and marsh.

'You say that you can only half see by moonlight,' I remarked; 'but you can see a great deal more than most men—than myself, for instance, when I am out at night.'

'Perhaps I can, but it is all happy-go-lucky work. When the moon is about nine days old no man can believe his eyes. It is like sleep-walking. When the moon is about that size I have shot little stints thinking they were curlew. Then I had a fair rake with big shot at a man, thinking he was a duck; and one night off Brancaster I see a rare lot of widgeon feeding, and pulled my punt up well within range, and pulled right off into them. It was nothing but a row of stakes; the widgeon were the other side, and the shot went on and I killed a brace. When you are lying as still as still on the muds, with nothing bigger than a mallard near you, you make bigger mistakes than that. An old duck will go walking splash! splash! splash! past you, so loud and heavy that you would think it was a man.

'I was lying on the bank called "Old Shells" one bright night, and a gentleman with me was lying a hundred yards off in a shallow hole on the mud, when a pair of mallards walked in between us.

'After we got up to go home I said to him:

'"Didn't you see nothing?"

'"No," he said.

'"What, nothing at all? Not that pair o' ducks?"

'"No," he said; "only I see a man and a boy go past."

'It was them two mallard he saw.[1] That was a capital place to make a duck-hole. Soon as you'd taken a bit of the jelly off the top you could dig down five feet if you liked.

'Once I was sitting there when a man I was "in Co." with

[1] Mr. Trevor Battye mistook geese for men by daylight in misty weather on the island of Kolgnev.

FLOCK AFTER FLOCK PASSED OVER

had a fair shot at me. His hole was full of water when we come. So I baled it out for him, and went off to mine. I lost sight o' him, and he o' me. Presently off goes his gun, and the shot come plump into the mud alongside o' me.

'Luckily it catched the mud where I had scooped it out of the hole; it sent great lumps over my head, and the top of my old water-boots rattled. A lot hit my side; but I had thick clothes on, and that never got through.

'That ain't so dangerous at night as when you are crawling down a creek with another man behind you. Once I was squatted down in a narrow creek, so narrow that my side-bag would not fit in, but was hitched up against the bank. Off goes the gentleman's gun, and all that charge of shot went between my back and the bag. I felt so bad that I lay down for ten minutes, and then I walked off home.

'Only once I came near to bringing a man into real danger.

'I was out by night in a gunning punt, and a young fellow who was "in Co." with me, and I heard those old grey geese "talking" on the sand. The tide was high, and we thought we could get right into them.

'I said, "Whatever you do, do you keep me in sight. We will work up together, and pull when I flash a match." Well, we sat up, but he got separated, though I knew he must be pretty close by, because we could see the line of the sand, and hear just where the geese were "talking" on the edge. There they set gabbling and splashing, though I couldn't quite see them. Then I made out a body of them to the right, so I backed my paddle and looked along my big gun to see how to take them. They seemed a bit too quiet for geese. Then I thought it was a piece of wreck, but I couldn't see any break in the line of it. However, I see it move, so thinks I, "Well, here goes," when part of a cloud cleared off from the moon, and there lay his punt, with him in it. Another two seconds, and I should have killed or sunk him. Instead, I backed my other paddle, and, without waiting for him, I had a good rake at the geese and shot four.'

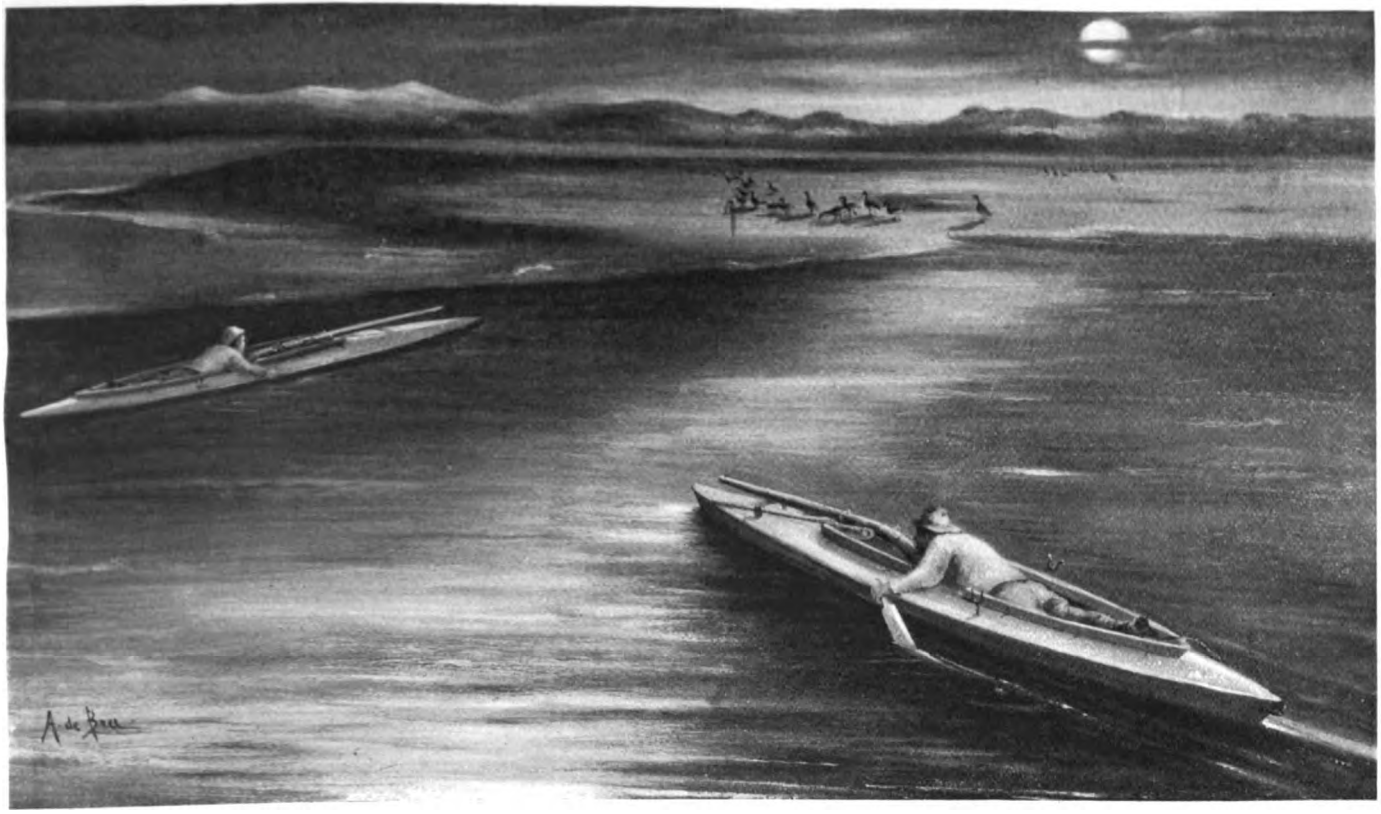
Wild birds were not the only creatures which fell to the old man's gun at Wells. Seals visit the harbour from time to time, and are often shot before they can regain the sea. They swim up the harbour stream, following the fish; before the embankment was made to the west of the entrance they were more commonly seen. Grey mullet were then very plentiful on what is now the new reclamation on the Holkham side; flat-fish—plaice, dabs, and flounders—also afforded a plentiful dinner to exploring seals.

Nothing could be prettier or more interesting to watch than these friendly visits of the seals. Unfortunately the poor beasts were looked upon as game of rather a high order, and seldom escaped being shot or caught.

Their habit was to come in with the flood-tide; and often a seal could be watched swimming below water just against the wall of the big quay. The 'gunners,' who had never seen the seals at the Zoo, were 'stammed' by the agility they showed in the water.

'I ha' seen one,' remarked my old friend, 'when the water was right clear alongside the quay, keep a-popping his head out, just for a moment, and then down that would go again, and tarn oover on the back, and swim so, ten feet down, a-looking up at us while we kep' a-looking down at him, and a-rubbing his face and working his tail just like a merrymaid' (mermaid). 'When the tide ebbed that would goo on up the crick, and crawl out, and lay on the mud asleepen. One day I was comen home across the marshes with my gun, when a see right a great 'un lying by one o' them ponds where you shot the redshank a-flighting. I see him afore he see me, and down I backs into a crick. The crick was so narrow that it wouldn't hardly hold me and my "side-bag," too, but I slipped down till I was within twenty yards of him, and then I peeped over the crab-grass and let fly at his head. He walloped away a bit towards the water, but anyhow that settled him. When he was dead he kep' sliding down the mud to the crick, where that was deep. He was too big to lift into the boat; so I got some boards and sloped them up, and rolled him up like a pig, till he fell into the boat. I flayed him, and had the skin tanned. I sold that to a curate. Once a sea-lion came and sat on the bar. He was asleepen, and one of the men got quietly up across the sand and threw a coat over his head, and then the others ran up, and the whole lot got hold of him, and so they "copped" him. They used to keep him in the docks—that was some deep holes of water inside the quay—and haul him in with a rope to show him to folks. Soon he got right tame, and would come to the man that owned him when he called.'

Almost every year an eagle used to be seen in the marshes. These were in nearly every case young white-tailed eagles going south. The projection of this north Norfolk coast is the natural alighting place of all birds travelling south along the shore, as well as of those which cross the sea from Norway and Sweden. I have seen peregrine falcons on passage come in from the North Sea in a line straight as an arrow for Holkham Park, and the



THERE LAY HIS PUNT, WITH HIM IN IT

eagles were once so common in Norfolk that they were known as 'Fen eagles.' My old gunner stated that he had more than once seen an eagle come up from the coast and fly over the lake at Holkham when it was covered with wildfowl.

'When the ducks see him that make 'em muster. Off they go to sea in a hurry; they can stand a hawk, but they don't want telling to go if an eagle come. One day I was coming home from shrimp catching, and when I come to the side of the big crick there sat an eagle within twenty yards off me. Another day, when I was crossing the marshes with my gun, I shot an eagle against the marsh head. I slipped up to the bridge, and when I fired he fell with one leg broken. I caught hold of him by the

I UPPED MY GUN AND BROUGHT HIM DOWN

neck, and he caught hold of the mud and crab-grass with his sound foot. Didn't he pull out a great lump o' mud and grass with his foot!—almost as big as a brick!'

Inside the line of the sea wall which embanks the last piece of salt-marsh west of Wells is a reed-bed of at least two hundred acres, with one or two pools of water. Towards evening this reed-bed is certain to attract any buzzard or marsh-harrier in the neighbourhood. They sit about on the bundles of cut reed, or flap along the dykes, looking for rats. Sometimes one comes out on to the open marsh east of the harbour. On one occasion one of these big hawks was attracted by the sight of dead ducks lying by the side of our old gunner, who was crouched in a 'duck-hole' on the mud, near the harbour mouth.

'The pake o' my cap,' he said, 'came out just so as the edge catched my eye, and I kept thinking something had latched in it and was flickering in the wind. I put up my hand once or twice to brush it off, but the flicker went on, and when I looked up there was that great hawk, flickering his wings just over my head, looking at them dead ducks that was lying by me. I upped my gun and brought him down. I sold him to a schoolmaster, and *he ate him*.'

A succession of high tides rendered it dangerous to lie up at night for the geese upon their sandbank, and though rabbiting in the sandhills, with excursions along the mud and marshes, gave plenty of sport and amusement by day, we seemed fated to return without shooting a single goose. On the last evening fortune relented so far as to enable us to kill one. A little observation had determined the exact line at which the main body of the geese left the marshes, and, after waiting till after dusk, the birds came out in a long line extending for more than a hundred yards, with their usual flute-like calls. One bird was hit, and fell at a distance in the shallow water of the bay. There was no doubt that it was down. It fell, as our gunner remarked, 'just as if you had hit the water with a malt-shovel.' Malting being one of the surviving industries of Wells, the metaphor seemed appropriate. But it was too dark to see, and though we were assured that if we waited another hour it would wash up on the point, the prospect of a long wait in the dark and cold was not inviting. We made a compromise, by arranging with a fisherman who had also been lying up for the geese, armed with a muzzle-loading eight-bore as long as an Afghan matchlock, to come round at dawn next morning and pick up the goose before the grey crows discovered the body. The bird was duly recovered, and proved to be a fine pink-footed goose, killed by a single No. 1 shot which had pierced from breast to back. The greater number, or more probably all, of the birds at Wells belong to this species, and though not so large as the grey-leg, our specimen was a handsome and gracefully proportioned bird. The pink legs and beak are exactly the shade which a *modiste* would select to set off the smoky greys of the plumage, and after hanging a fortnight, and roasting—care being taken not to baste the bird with its own gravy—it was as good as a stubble goose at Michaelmas. Its weight was 5½ lbs., though the expanse of the wings makes it appear a vastly larger bird when flying high across the levels of the sands.

'NOT THE USUAL WAY'

BY OWEN RHOSCOMYL

In telling of encounters with especially fine specimens of deer, the narrator usually gets up steam over the difficulties of the stalk, piles up the agony upon the getting within good range, and finally bursts into a pæan of triumph with the shot that tumbles the stag. Well, those are the lines along which Fate usually does move when man meets deer; but this is the tale of the exception, when the meeting ended, not in the usual way, but in the victory of the deer and the tumbling of the man, in fact.

Perhaps I ought to say boy instead of man. The notion of attempting what I did would hardly have struck a man, and even if it had he would probably have been physically too heavy for carrying it out.

It was in the last few days of that broken weather which preludes the opening of spring proper along the eastern ranges of the Rockies. We were busy gathering in the saddle-horses from their winter ranges, ready for the coming round-up, and this was the third day. Our luck was good, and we had found or accounted for every head of the herd, save two which were notorious for general cussedness and this sort of 'evasion.' Therefore, we had split up from camp, each man heading for a particular section of country, and each determined to leave nothing undone to outwile the cunning of the uncaptured two. My own direction lay due west, right in the face of a huge

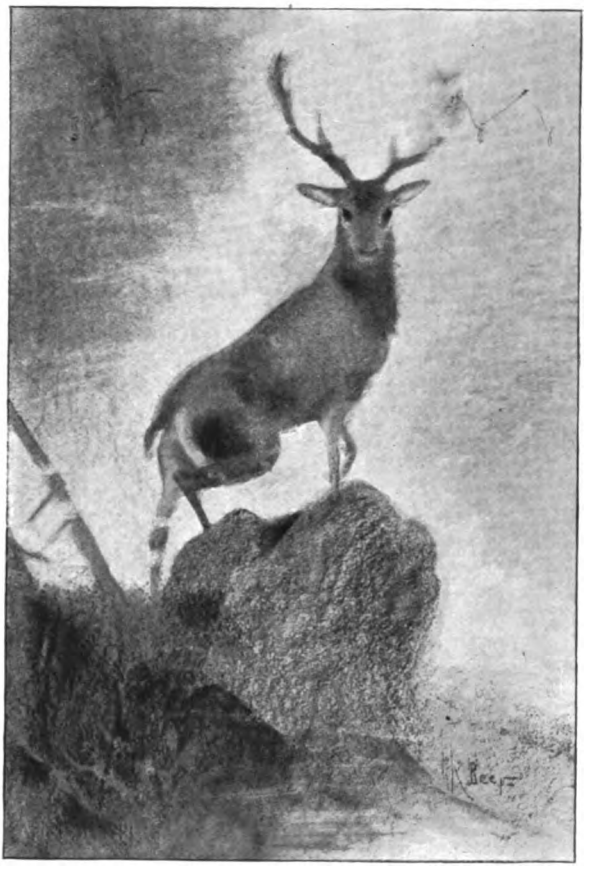
mountain, which stretched like a wall on either hand for some twelve or fourteen miles from flank to flank. The only break in its granite front was about midway, where a sort of skin-deep gulch came down from the highest peak, but too steeply for a man to tackle without making a special job of it. But where this gulch struck the plain below there was a spring of water in a clump of quaking aspen; the only water for miles, and it was at that spring I hoped to run upon one of the missing pair.

It would have to be a surprise, and possibly a dash with the 'rope,' or lasso, and accordingly I looped and coiled my rawhide rope ready in my hands as I mentally planned my approach. The gulch had the appearance of being continued for half a mile or so across the plain, by reason of two ridges which ran, like the bones of the mountain's instep, along out on the prairie for that distance. So, thought I, if I could only drop down over that southern ridge, at a point just above the line of the spring, I should have the upper ground of the horse, and, even if I missed my throw, should still have him inside the circle, and thus push him towards camp in any case,

My greatest help, however, lay in the mist, which would have done credit to Snowdon itself. All the morning it had been playing about the mountain, mostly in a grey shroud that hid everything, but every now and then through wide rifts showing great patches of the dark mass behind. The skirts of this trailing drapery drifted well out on the plain, quite, in fact, to the ends of the two low ridges, and accordingly, as I pushed my way along the outer edge of the southern one, I could see but a very short distance in any direction. Judging at last that I had gone quite far enough, I turned sharp to the right to ascend the ridge, and my barefooted horse found it cruel work as he tried to pick a path amongst the flints and petrifactions of which it was composed. Casting my eyes up and ahead to see if there were much more of this, I suddenly saw one of the most striking sights I ever remember to have met. It was a reproduction of Landseer's magnificent picture of a stag, standing broadside upon a knoll, and with a turn of the head majestically facing the spectator. But as it was a living and unconscious tableau, set in the grey solitude of Nature's own frame, so did it grandly beggar the mere painted picture by its effect, and I checked for a moment, the better to absorb it. The massive front of the mountain showed purple through the rifted mists behind him, and mist and mountain together combined to throw into fitting relief what seemed to me the noblest deer I had ever seen. For in that

situation and that atmosphere he loomed up more like an elk than a blacktail, though he was not thirty yards away.

The butt of my six-shooter was touching the heel of my hand, but I thought of the engraving that used to hang on the wall at home; and I did not draw. For that brief moment he was sacred. Putting my horse into motion, I resolved to go my way and let him go his.



MAJESTICALLY FACING THE SPECTATOR

But when I came out on the flat top of the ridge, I found to my astonishment that he was still almost in the same spot, but moving in a most erratic manner, zigzagging to and fro as if demented. To be on the same level with him, and to see him acting thus, took away a measure of the softer feelings with which I had so lately regarded him, but still I stopped short of

shooting. The lasso, however, coiled for a dash at the horse, was in my hand. I could not resist the temptation. Swinging the loop, I pressed the spurs home and let fly. But I had not reckoned sufficiently with the great spread of his horns and the zigzag of his movements, so that, instead of compassing both horns, the noose reached only the near one, and before it could be drawn taut a swoop and a toss of the head had left it only

BRINGING HIM DOWN ALL OF A HEAP

hanging upon the extreme tip, from which it flew with a sweep the moment that his weight came upon it.

With a whistling snort, he started along down the ridge towards the open prairie, and I was just thinking that that was about my last of him, when he suddenly stopped short, turned about, and started back, straight up the ridge again, for the mountains. But I had relooped and coiled the rope again, and as he came into

line across my front I pushed out, and, leaving the horns out of calculation, caught him by both forefeet, bringing him down all of a heap. Before he could make another move I had snubbed him short up to the saddle-horn, in spite of the misgiving snorts of my horse, who did not at all relish such side-shows to business.

At four paces' distance then, and from the height of my saddle, I had a good look at my capture, admiring immensely the spread of his horns, and thinking how glad I was that he had not yet shed them for the spring. Then, as he began to struggle, it flashed into my mind to ride him. Many men had ridden buffaloes—I had seen it done myself the summer before—but I had never heard of anyone riding a blacktail deer. Never stopping to think, I slipped the reins over the horse's ears, and leaped down. Pulling the horse a step nearer till the rope slacked sufficiently, I slipped the noose off the deer's forefeet, threw my leg across him, and seized him by the horns as he rose beneath me. It felt more like being astride of some sort of snake, so slim was his body after that of a horse, and so much did he squirm as he staggered a half-stride forward to gather himself.

He was heading down the ridge. I saw that, as I felt his back hump beneath me; and then all the world was fog and fur, as he lit in to bucking with a vim and skill that would have astonished even a Mexican mule.

I had seized his horns at first with the notion of preventing his bucking too fiercely A horse needs to get his head down between his feet before he can do much in that line. But this gentleman apparently remembered that he was an improvement upon a horse, in that he had horns as well as ears, and his object appeared to be to play cup-and-ball with me and catch me upon them. The first jump enlightened me as to what I had undertaken, for he seemed to develop a hundred tines and antlers upon those horns, and I hit them every one with outlying portions of my anatomy as he came down, stiff-legged, with all four hoofs together. His slim and limber body gave my knees no grip to hold me off those points as he laid them back to meet me, and when he came up beneath me like a new earthquake for the second jump, I knew that I should have to go, and that instantly, if I did not intend to be spiked.

But when he came down I no longer had any option. So seriously did the tines hurt me that I piled down shoulder first upon the flints, and for a moment was quite unable to draw breath.

When I did manage a gasp I saw that my lord the buck was

regarding me from half a dozen paces' distance, head down as if facing a wolf, and evidently prepared to renew the contest as soon as I liked. But I was only thankful that he had not jumped upon me the moment I fell. I was wondering why he had not done so, and staring at him the while as I lay, when I at last noticed that he had a freshly-bleeding bullet tear, low down in the off ear, with a corresponding scar on the base of that horn, and now I guessed at once that some fellow up above had hunted him off the mountain with that close shot, and that the shock of it had

HEAD DOWN AS IF FACING A WOLF

dazed him, causing that eccentricity of movement which had so puzzled me. At least, I could think of no other solution, for deer are not like horses; they never eat the 'rattleweed'—'rattle' meaning crazy.

But while I guessed he whistled again, and struck the ground sharply with his off forehoof. I had better move before he did jump. Already he was gathering himself to spring, and I scrambled hastily up and hobbled to my horse. Climbing painfully into the saddle, I saw that the buck had raised his head, disconcerted at the new move. Naturally I could not shoot him

HIS SLIM AND LIMBER BODY GAVE MY KNEES NO GRIP

then, after he had beaten me at my own choice; but I grew more and more savage as the blood trickled down inside my shirt, and the next minute I had coiled the rope for another throw. I'd be hanged if I'd be beaten by an etceteraed deer; I'd boss him if it took a leg to do it. But he took alarm at the swinging of the loop, and made for the mountain again. Yet he was stubborn and kept a straight line, in spite of its bringing him so near across my front.

I swung for his feet again, my horse at the gallop, and as the rope caught and tumbled him, the buck in his struggle caught his off hind in the loop between his fore feet. Thus he was at my mercy as I brought my horse round to face him. Bundling stiffly down, and winding at every move, I made the rope fast with a slip-knot, so that it was impossible for him to rise. Then the ignoble impulse to revenge took me, and I caught him by the spread of his horns and shook him as I growled out, 'You son of a gun, you! I've a good mind to ride back to camp for a saw and saw your horns off, and ride you anyhow.'

But he looked so piteous, bound and helpless as he was, and there was such a human look in his great eyes, that my heart smote me, and when, just then, he gave a great gasp like a sob and let his tongue loll out, I confess I was undone and gave in at once. Mounting again, I loosed the rope from the saddle-horn, and then, stooping down, slipped the knot from his feet.

He got up jerkily and started off with a very undeerlike gait for the first few lengths. But at that moment the mist lifted and tore wide in front of him, showing the mountain and its ragged gulch ahead, and he leaped away with a bound, like one who suddenly finds himself again after long bewilderment. I sat apostrophising him as he went, 'Don't I wish you'd been a man! You wouldn't ha' got off so easily, and don't you forget it,' &c. For the raw mist was nipping my hurts shrewdly through the rags of my shirt.

Well, I was very glad to find that neither of the missing horses was at the spring, and when I reached camp again I let the cook explain my hurts by his exclamation, 'Ho! been a-riding reckless again? Horse cem down with you amongst the down timber, I guess. One o' these times you'll turn up in camp missin', with your neck broke. Here y'air; a mouthful of this hyere whisky, an' don't you tell the boys that I've got any.'

Nor did I ever explain further or mention my meeting with that deer. Not that the boys would have seen any difficulty in the matter of belief save in one respect, viz. how was it that,

having failed with the first throw, I ever got a second? They would ask me whether the deer dismounted to tighten his girths? Whether he had stopped to make camp, and if I had then taken advantage of him to ride upon him while he was frying bacon or making coffee with his back to me? Or they might suggest that he had pulled out his pipe and asked me for a charge of tobacco, and that while he was absorbed in keeping the match from the wind I had proudly dropped the noose over him a second time. In fact, I could see a whole summer's amusement—for them—all growing out of that one encounter. While if I were to

I HAPPENED TO KILL THE VERY SAME DEER

acknowledge that I had straddled the deer and then got 'piled,' why, life would not be worth living—to a boy at any rate. Not only the public wit, but something which would be equally uncomfortable in another way; that is, the private lectures upon the danger of such follies, from men who hardly ever uttered a word in a year's round. So I dressed my hurts with resin and bear's grease in secret, and said nothing in public, not even when, the winter following, I happened to kill the very same deer upon the top of that mountain, hunting him from a timber camp on the other side.

Not only did I know him by the earmark which I had seen when freshly made, but he was famous on the mountain, having been driven out from the herds by the younger bucks and so been compelled to run alone. Running alone, he had thus to depend solely upon himself for safety, and this had bred a degree of cunning which had spread his fame among the axemen. But the manner of his killing would make another story as long as this one, and so I leave it.

And yet I think I was sorry when, after killing him, I found that he was none other than my friend of the ride.

BETWEEN TWO FIRES

BY GUY CADOGAN ROTHERY

WHEN Frank Leslie had been a couple of months in Corsica, roaming about the island in search of mouflon, pig, and other small 'deer,' he began to realise the true inner meaning of certain enigmatical words of the Prefect; an unfortunate Parisian who found his official exile in Ajaccio hard to bear. The two men had been chatting about sport, the Prefect with a rapid access of enthusiasm describing the beauties of the mouflon. Then, with a sudden lowering of the voice and shrug of his shoulders, he had said:

'It is a noble beast—somewhat dangerous. So is the Corsican. *C'est un animal qu'on n'apprivoisera jamais!*'

At all events, Leslie thought that the great man's words were as applicable to the taciturn human inhabitants as they were to the wild mountain sheep. He found much to admire in his bearded guide, Franche Cassanera; but, although on the most friendly footing, Franche said very little, and, except by a few winged words or more eloquent flashes from his eyes, rarely revealed his true sympathies and inmost ambitions. It was only occasionally that anyone could guess the depth of tumultuous passions that lay hid beneath his cold exterior.

Fagged out after a day's hard trudge over hill and dale through the macchie, Leslie and his guide towards evening entered a forest clearing, and in the midst of a small garden saw a square-built stone house. It was a grim-looking structure, with a single narrow doorway, and two closely-shuttered windows some eight

or nine feet from the ground. As they approached the house a bare-legged, black-shirted child came forward and stood in the pathway.

'Is your father at home?' said Franche.

The boy shook his head.

'Your mother?'

Another shake of the head, but the youngster with his hands in his pockets barred the way and stared at the strangers.

'Anyone at home?'

'Sister!'

'Good! and will she give us a bite and a sup? see, we have been shooting,' and Franche held aloft a couple of brace of partridges.

The boy nodded in a friendly fashion, and dashed into the house, followed slowly by the visitors. They were met at the door by a pretty lass, brown as a berry. Briefly bidding them welcome, she placed three chairs at a white wood table. Leslie looked round the cellar-like room; it was almost dark within, as the only rays of light came through the doorway. In the furthest corner there was a rough ladder leading up to a trapdoor in the ceiling—evidently the only access to the floor above. Meanwhile the girl and her little brother brought forward a dish of smoking chestnuts, brown bread, a bowl of steaming-hot coffee, and a dish of grapes. The small boy sat down at table with the weary travellers, while his sister waited upon them, silence hardly being broken. As soon as the meal was over Franche rose, placed a couple of partridges on the table, thanked the girl, and, beckoning to his master, strode out. Leslie, knowing the island etiquette, curbed his impulse to dip his hand in his pocket and bring forth small change. When they had left the house behind them, he said:

'I believe there was someone upstairs. I saw a pair of eyes peeping through cracks in the shutters.'

'Likely enough. Perhaps the father has reasons of his own to be suspicious of strangers.'

'Queerly built house, eh?'

'Oh! the house is good enough. It's strong, and nobody could get in if a man or a couple of women with guns didn't wish it.'

'I can quite believe that. But is it the usual style?'

'Well, people must take precautions.'

'The *vendetta*, you mean?'

Franche nodded, and they walked on in silence. Suddenly, just as it was getting dusk, they heard a prodigious squealing, and

two huge wild boars broke cover and dashed across the path, Franche had difficulty in keeping back the dogs, while Leslie, raising his double-barrelled breech-loader, let fly with the right; piggie stumbled and rolled over dead, the ball having entered just behind the shoulder-blade. Franche at once dashed into the bush with his dogs, hoping to turn back the second porker, while Leslie loaded. Only just in time, for again a boar broke cover, though he, too, came from the right, and charged fiercely in the direction where Franche was struggling in the bush. Leslie was taken off his guard; his bullet did not arrest the onward dash of the grunting brute. Quickly reloading, Leslie stood ready for eventualities; presently he heard a shot fired, and then loud calls from Franche. The guide had been unsuccessful in heading off the first pig, but had killed the one Leslie had wounded. They were fine animals, and it was decided that they should be hoisted up and tied to the branches of a tree to be left until a village was reached and shepherds could be sent to fetch them. In the midst of discussing matters a man appeared in the pathway, hurrying towards them. The new comer carried a gun in his hand. He was dressed in the usual coarse home-spun, high-lows, and slouched hat, and his face was covered with a black beard; he might have been taken for Franche's twin-brother.

'Hallo! so it was you who beat up the boar?' cried Leslie.

'No! the gendarmes are after me,' answered the man, with a grim smile. 'But there is worse. Leave those beasts alone; the bush is on fire.'

They were in a deep valley, and as they listened a sullen roar rose above the swirl of waters in the noisy brook.

'Make haste, sir!' cried Franche, 'we must not let the flames catch us here; the draught is great and the flames will sweep up like wild horses.'

The three men dashed forward up the hill, Leslie quite oblivious of the fact that the new comer was flying before justice. As they reached the brow a grand but awful sight met their gaze. The whole mountain side was a blaze of leaping flames. Great waves of fire swept onward, enveloping the resinous shrubs in their embrace, and darting up tall trees with hissing tongues of red and gold.

'Back to the water!' cried Leslie.

''Tis useless, sir; it will be worse there in that funnel, the fire will eat everything up, and it runs faster than we can. Our only chance is to dash through the flames before us and reach the barren rocks beyond.'

THE SMALL BOY SAT DOWN WITH THE WEARY TRAVELLERS

There were loud shouts behind, and then shots. Turning round, Leslie saw the blue uniforms of the gendarmes half hidden by a curtain of smoke. A bullet whistled over his head. Clearly, the only safety lay in dashing forward into the green bush, which they did. Fortunately the shrubs were damp and only caught fire slowly. Franche pointed to a long and broad strip of barren rock, a spur of the high peak above them, which intruded itself like a huge wedge into the forest Without much mishap beyond a little singeing, they reached the welcome desert of stones. They saw that the stretch of undergrowth just traversed was all on fire; the flames dived down into the valley, and almost at once the whole countryside was illuminated as though it were noon, huge flashes leaping up in the air.

'We are well out of that!' cried Leslie.

'Let us hasten away!'

'But why? We have left the flames behind us,' for Leslie did not much care to remain longer in the company of the new comer. He argued that a man whom the gendarmes did not hesitate to fire upon must be a desperate character.

Franche understood the hesitation.

'Look down there,' said he, 'at the spur of that hill far below. I fear the fire branched off there, one stream sweeping up here and the other yonder. We shall be caught in a trap here. Our friend must go forward. Is it a case of *vendetta*?'

The stranger assented. It was an ancient quarrel, he said. But there was no time to talk, and they moved on again. Franche's conjecture proved correct. The advancing fire had been split in two by the hill and had swept up to right and left. However, it seemed as though they would have plenty of time to cross the broad belt of trees that lay between them and another stretch of rocky hillside before the flames came. It was not without a very natural alarm that Leslie perceived that they were tramping over a brittle, resinous-scented carpet. Looking up he saw that by far the larger number of trees were gigantic pines. If once the flames reached the trees, with their brittle leaves and bark impregnated with turpentine, the conflagration would be terrible. Realising this, the three men began to run, until brought to a standstill by a series of sharp reports.

'Hark! those are rifle shots.'

'No, far worse than that. Let us make haste!'

'There, again! What is it, Franche?'

'The flames have caught the trees and the pine cones are bursting. We must run for our lives!'

It was difficult to run, for in the thickest part of the forest it was quite dark: the undergrowth was dense, partly covering rugged boulders. But the light came all too soon: first a faint glow with louder and more frequent reports, then weird flickers ending in a bright glare. The flames were near at hand, but it was a curious fact that the tree fire had out-distanced the bush fire. Tongues of flame leapt from tree top to tree top, slowly licking down the trunks to the bush and grass below. Great cones, still tightly closed and full of sap, became heated, and then with a loud report burst open, and with the force of expansion were torn from the branches, and propelled violently through the air, falling amidst the close mass of pine needles and twigs. These fiery petards came hurtling through the forest, spreading the conflagration far and wide, so that soon a canopy of fire was above Leslie and his companions. There was a sullen roar of advancing flames amongst the undergrowth, while the leaves above hissed and reports followed in quick succession. Red-hot balls sputtering needles and great drops of hot turpentine came tumbling down about them; it was a veritable fiery furnace. Majestic domes and arches of flames distilled a burning rain, which, falling on the ground, formed a bed of embers, setting the dead leaves alight. Gusts of scorching wind and stifling smoke swept past. On they rushed, each footfall sending up sparks to meet the glistening rain that floated slowly down, but ever thicker and thicker. Above the dull roar sharp reports of bursting pine cones could still be heard, followed by the crash of falling timber and dread sounds like ghastly shrieks and groans as the green trees twisted and split under the fierce heat. At last Leslie caught sight of a blackened hillside before him. It had been green that morning, though now all verdure was 'eaten up' by the hungry flames. Black and desolate though it was, it meant safety to the three men, who made frantic efforts to reach the spot. Then, on the brow of the hill, appeared five men in blue uniforms. They held their rifles ready, and watched the three figures advancing through the burning forest. Instinctively Leslie and his companions halted.

'It is useless,' cried the stranger; 'there is no escape for me. Go forward you two, they will do you no harm.' Turning to Franche, he said: 'Better the flames than a prison. Tell the people outside how Juan Coni died.'

Franche leapt back, and, with a fierce yell, glared upon the stranger.

'I am Franche Cassanera of Pietroselli,' he cried, and there,

THERE WAS A SULLEN ROAR OF ADVANCING FLAMES

surrounded by flames and smouldering leaves, he raised his gun and fired. The stranger flung up his arms and plunged forward in the glowing embers. At the same instant the crack of a rifle rang out, and Franche dropped beside his victim. So rapidly had the tragedy occurred that Leslie stood still in amaze, but now he dashed up to the two fallen men, endeavouring to raise them. He was seized and dragged away by the gendarmes.

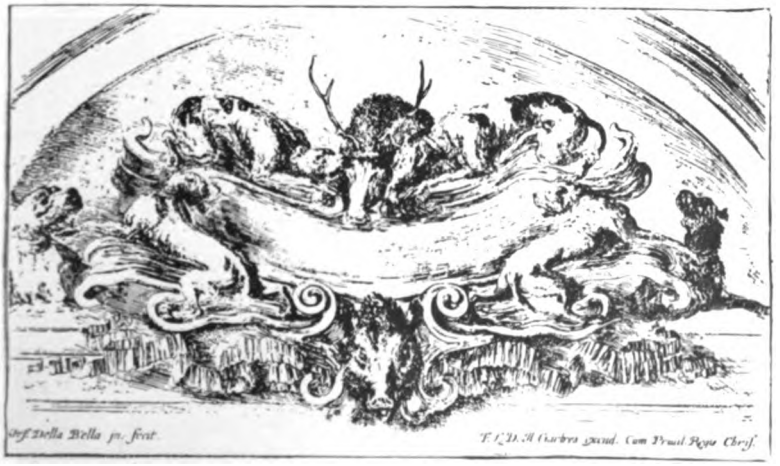
On his recovery, and when he had satisfied the inquisitive *Juge d'instruction*, Leslie learnt that the Coni and Cassanera had been engaged in the gentle pastime of potting each other for some generations. Juan Coni had dwelt in another part of the island, and only came in contact with Franche through being called away from home to avenge an uncle who had fallen in the ancient quarrel. It was Coni who lay hidden in the forest house.

Another incident was equally curious in its way. A sympathetic sergeant of gendarmes, a Corsican, came to Leslie, and said:

'Monsieur, your day was not quite lost. I and my men, who were tracking Coni, discovered your two wild boar; we found them very good, and as the big one had huge tusks, we preserved his head. Here it is. It will remind you of our poor island.'

Before leaving Ajaccio, Leslie went to bid the Prefect good-bye. They shook hands cordially.

'My dear Prefect,' said Leslie. 'I have been all over the island. I have seen your mouflons, your Corsicans. You are quite right. *C'est un animal qu'on n'apprivoisera jamais!*'



A TOBOGGANING TOUR

BY BESSIE MACMORLAND

ONE of the many striking characteristics of the end of our century is the love of locomotion which has lately developed. Whether we are old or young, strong or feeble, millionaires or needy clerks, whether we travel by road, rail, or water, our great desire is to leave the place we are in for some place where we are not. And this craze has its own special literature. We read of walking tours, travels on horseback, rambles in a caravan, rides on bicycles, balloon ascents, yachting trips, explorations into Central Africa or to the North Pole; and even of that adventurous trio which intends to make the circuit of the world pushing a wheel-barrow. But amid these many modes of motion thus described, a tobogganing tour has not yet found a place, and a description of an expedition on these wooden steeds may prove somewhat of a novelty.

In the beginning of February, 1896, it suddenly occurred to five visitors at the Hotel Belvedere, Davos-Platz, that a few days might be most delightfully spent in tobogganing over the roads of the surrounding district. No snow had fallen for several weeks, the weather was magnificent, the sleigh tracks in capital order, and the moon was nearly full. Such a combination of attractions could not be resisted; so we hastily mapped out our route, packed our bags, collected a quantity of warm wraps, and were ready to start. The party thus gathered together consisted of two ladies and three gentlemen. Both the ladies were seasoned tobogganers, two of the gentlemen had rendered their names famous in the racing annals of the winter, but one was a complete novice whose native pluck, however, made up for his inexperience. Of the wooden steeds used on this occasion

two were 'Swiss,' one a 'skeleton,' the fifth the 'omnibus,' all rather mysterious terms requiring a word of explanation. The 'Swiss' toboggan, or *Handschlitten*, was originally employed by the inhabitants of the Grisons before strangers set foot in their valleys. On it the rider sits upright in a comfortably padded saddle, guiding with his feet and with iron-pointed pegs in his hands. Since the introduction of the 'American coaster,' which is longer, lower, and faster than the ancient ship of the country, the 'Swiss' is somewhat scornfully regarded as a mount fit only for women or for infirm old men. It must, however, always hold its own for safety and comfort. Luxuriously seated on its broad back, you may glide along at ease with full leisure to enjoy the scenery around you.

The American coaster requires very different treatment from the Swiss. The rider lies flat upon it, head downwards, brandishing his legs in the air, and guides by touching with his toes behind, or by jerking the front part of his machine in the direction he wishes it to take. Altogether the position does not conduce to the admiration of nature. In the 'skeleton,' a later development of the coaster, all superfluous flesh, or in this case woodwork, falls away, and only the iron bones remain. Last of all we pass to the 'omnibus.' It belongs to no class of toboggan, but, like the 'Phœnix,' stands alone. In form it is a long stout 'Swiss,' but it is fitted with two saddles, one behind the other, as in a tandem bicycle, and is calculated to bear a double load. When it carries two persons of opposite sexes, it is supposed to be fulfilling its highest functions.

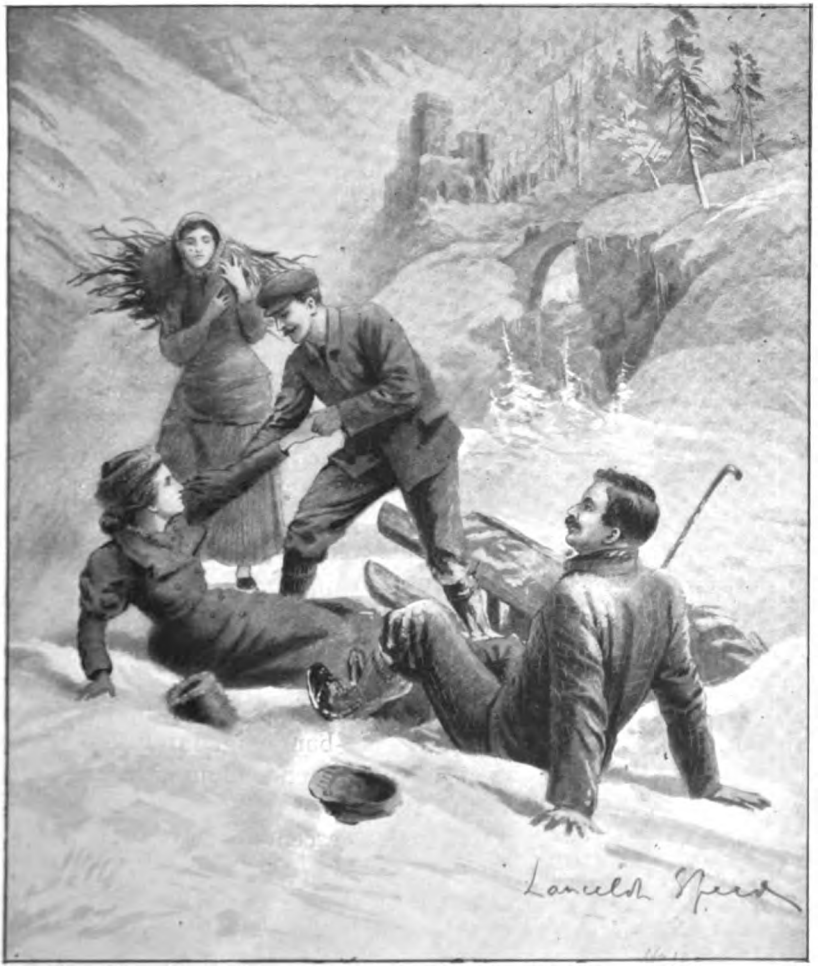
Riders and steeds having been described we are ready to start. We have decided to 'tail' to Kulm, the highest point in the Davos valley, from which road and rail alike descend to Klosters—that is to say, we tie our toboggans behind the sleigh, sit on them, and are dragged along. These so-called 'tailing' parties are in great favour in Davos, and create much amusement, for the 'tail' swings from side to side of the track in a very sporting manner when there is a long line. We are only a small company, and jog along merrily and without mishap till we reach Kulm. There we loose our toboggans, bid adieu to our sleigh, and start on the five miles descent to Klosters.

'Room for the "skeleton!"' The owner gives it a shove, throws himself upon it, and propels himself forwards by digging his toes into the snow behind. The 'Swiss' are got under weigh by pushing off with the pegs, and in another minute we are tilting down the high road between feathery snow-banks, from which

the paling tops peep out in places. The sun shines down from a cloudless sky; on either side the mountain peaks rear themselves up in dazzling whiteness to meet the deep blue above. Spotless, untrodden snowfields gleam and glitter round us, the keen air in our faces gives us fresh vigour as we dash along, guiding ourselves deftly round each difficult corner. At such a moment there can be but one answer to the oft-repeated question, 'Is life worth living?' All too soon our ride ends at the little village of Laret, and we must drag our toboggans for a mile till we reach the next steep incline. Our road leads through dense fir woods, still and motionless. No sound of bird or beast breaks the silence this beautiful winter afternoon, but the sunlight peers through the branches and traces strange patterns on the snow. Our next starting point is at the beginning of the last two miles of the road to Klosters, on which the International races and many smaller contests take place. In the Canton des Grisons we always have time races, and the pace of each runner is decided by means of a stop-watch at the start and another at the finish. To-day we have the place all to ourselves, but in imagination we see the crowd of competitors, spectators, and timekeepers gathered here on the day of some great event, and hear the fateful ten seconds, five seconds, four, three, two, one, go! It is with a feeling of tranquillity very different from the excitement of racing that we slide along on this occasion. The 'bridge'—that bugbear of the racer who, panting and red-faced, struggles to drive his wooden steed over a few yards of level road—strikes no terror into our hearts. Unmolested we pass Rock Corner, notorious for its rabble of loud-voiced onlookers, and carefully steer round the last curve, at which many an unwary one has crushed his chances of victory by an involuntary plunge through the palings into the field below. We reached Klosters safely, and hurried to the station only to find we had still half an hour to wait for the train. Our journey through the Prättigau Valley to Landquart, where the narrow-gauge railway from Chur joins the main line, and along the Rhine to Chur, our destination for the night, was quite uneventful.

The next morning we drew aside our window curtains with some apprehension as to the state of the weather; but our fears vanished when we caught a glimpse of clear blue sky through the transparent vapour which shrouded the streets of Chur. The appearance of the sun could not be expected for some time, for the town lies in a hollow overshadowed by the mighty Pizokels, and does not enjoy much sunshine in winter. To one part of the town the sun bids adieu in December for an absence of six weeks,

and in another he sets at the early hour of one o'clock. On our hotel he fortunately rose in regal splendour at a comparatively early hour, and off we started on our morning's expedition. The rider of the 'skeleton' had unhappily bruised his knee, and could



A LARGE RUT PROVED FATAL

not ride his own machine, so he accepted the offer of a seat on the 'omnibus' for the time being.

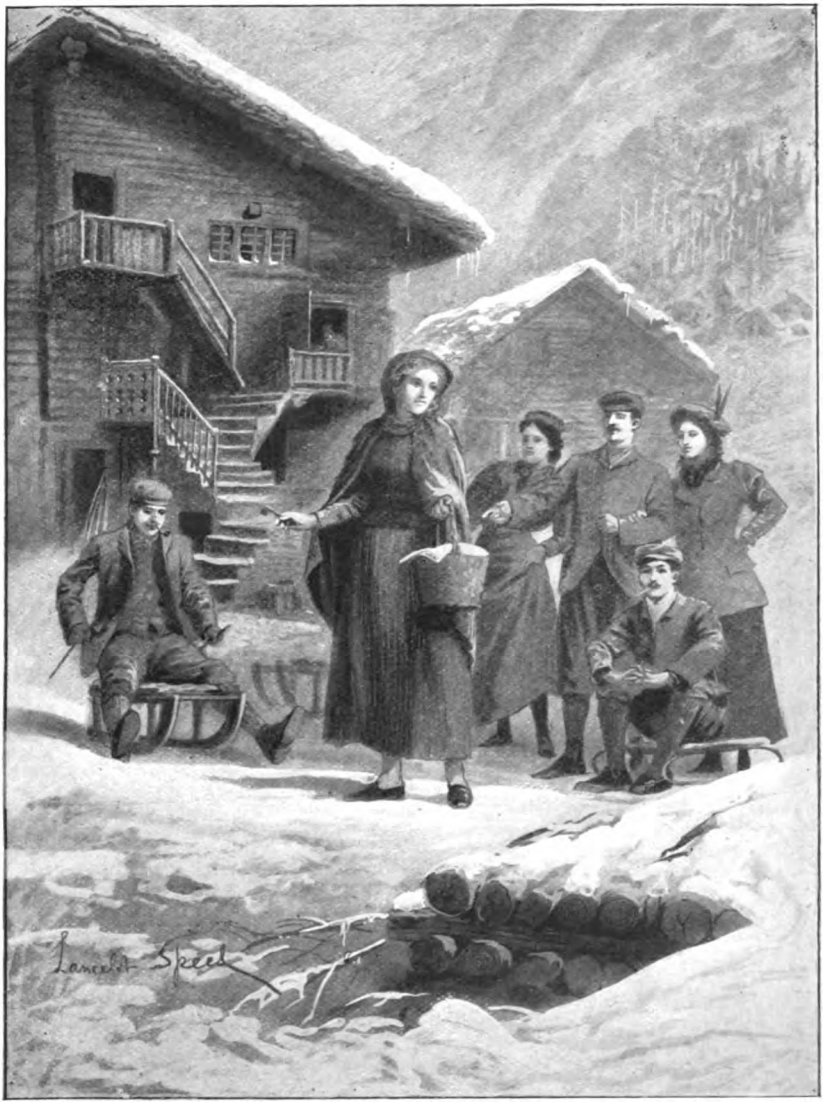
The invalid and the lazy lady of the party drove off in an einspänner or one-horse sleigh, the others walked behind. We were on the road leading up from Chur towards the Engadine,

and towards Davos. Higher and higher we climbed, brighter and brighter grew the sunlight. To our left, as we paused to look back, the valley of the Rhine marked the way to Thusis, below us lay Chur, and on the hillside opposite we could trace the course we were to follow that afternoon, leading into the Schanfigg valley. After about an hour and a half of walking and driving, for pedestrians and horse kept almost equal pace, we halted at the little village of Malix, five miles from Chur, and mounted our wooden steeds for the return journey. Seventeen minutes of keen enjoyment followed. The road was well beaten, and so wide that we could pass the horse-sleighs we met without pulling up; and though a large rut at one side proved fatal to the 'bus on several occasions, no harm was done to its occupants. One after another we dashed into Chur, and found ourselves in the middle of a crowd of workmen on their way home for dinner. A grown-up person on a toboggan is a rare sight in the Grisons capital, though children and schoolboys are very fond of the sport, so we created much excitement. In fact, our appearance was considered so remarkable, that a detailed, though somewhat incorrect, account of our exploits was subsequently published in the local daily paper.

At one o'clock we left Chur for Langweis, three of us in a zweispänner or two-horse sleigh, to which was attached a little carts with the luggage and the toboggans, the others behind in a modest einspänner. That drive is a thing long to be remembered. Slowly we climb out of the town along the steep hillside, the warm sun beating down upon us, the crisp snow crunching beneath our horses' feet. Upwards, ever upwards, round the rugged buttresses of rock that jut out on to our path, over the high-arched bridges thrown across ice-bound mountain torrents, through the little clusters of low brown chalets on either side of our way; past the grey ruined castles perched high aloft, the cradles of ancient noble lines, whose descendants are now prosaic Grisons burghers.

We pass a few sleighs drawn by sleek mild-eyed cows, and at one corner we meet the yellow-bodied diligence swinging swiftly downwards, but otherwise the road is deserted till we reach St. Peter. Here poetry turns to prose: we realise that the keen air has whetted our appetites, and remember with satisfaction that we have telegraphed to order coffee, knowing that celerity is not a Swiss virtue. We knock at the door of the little village inn. No response. We rattle at the handle, the door is locked! Consternation is depicted on every face, and a torrent of abuse is about to be poured on the sender of the telegram when a portly figure

comes panting down the village street bearing a key! She had only made a slight mistake, and fancied we were to arrive the



SHE FANCIED WE WERE TO ARRIVE THE NEXT DAY

next day, being unable to imagine that anyone could expect coffee to be ready at three hours' notice. However, in due course of time she prepares the welcome beverage, produces red wine for

our drivers, and bread for our horses, and sends us on our way thoroughly refreshed.

We reach Langweis about six o'clock, just as the day is fading into twilight, and find our rooms at the little inn well heated and ready to receive us. There the Schanfigg ends at the foot of a steep hillside, sloping upwards to the Strela Pass; and just opposite Langweis the valley to Arosa, which we hope to investigate to-morrow, branches off at right angles. We are only about ten miles from Davos in actual distance, though we have traversed about sixty miles to reach our present halting place; but the snowfields of the Strela Pass, the direct route, are impassable at this season, save to an expert on snow-shoes. While we gaze around us the moon rises round and full, and as the fascinations of a moonlight night among the Alps are very hard to resist, we all turn out for a ramble before dinner, in spite of the fatigues of the day.

An investigation of the weather the next morning did not reveal such brilliant prospects as on the preceding day. A thick mist lay all around the little inn, and above it we could see grey shreds of nimbus scurrying along the hilltops. By breakfast-time the fog had vanished, but the thick cloud curtain still hung over us. However, we hoped for the best, and started up the side-valley to Arosa, about seven miles off. We had sent the einspänner back to Chur with the luggage; the invalid and the lazy lady seated themselves in the zweispänner, while the rest of us walked, shortening our road by striking through the fir woods from time to time. Pedestrians and sleigh reached their destination at about the same time, and halted for a short rest at the Hotel zur Post The hotels and houses of Arosa lie scattered over the steep mountain slope on one side of the valley. As a winter resort it is still at an early stage of its development. The beautiful scenery and the strains of a somewhat discordant band are supposed, between them, to afford sufficient entertainment for the visitors, whose names appear in primitive style affixed to a notice-board by the wayside.

We saw an unmistakable Englishman stalking solemnly along in knickerbockers and sailor hat, and somewhat pitied him in his hermitage. The grey canopy over the mountain peaks shrouded the view, so after a hasty survey we started on our downward journey of about twenty miles to Chur. We hoped to toboggan at least half the distance. The 'bus lumbered off first, but as it was again irresistibly attracted by a rut, it was soon overtaken by the next rider. A haycart at an awkward corner and a long train

of sleighs laden with wine barrels in a fast piece of 'straight' proved somewhat unwelcome impediments; but, in spite of all obstacles, the first three miles of the descent were covered by the fastest performer in ten minutes. The 'bus, however, established a record of its own by eleven glorious spills. Walking and driving alternately we reached Langweis, lunched, and packed ourselves into our zweispänner for our drive over the first part of the road to Chur, which was too flat to be ridden. The mist once more enveloped us, and grew denser and denser as we proceeded, so that we began seriously to reconsider our plan of pushing on that night to Tiefenkasten. A little above the village of Kastiel we halted, climbed out of our carriage, untied our wooden horses, and set off on our seven miles descent into the capital of the Grisons. What a ride that was! We skimmed over the road we had so laboriously climbed the day before: we flew past the rocky buttresses and ruined castles looming above us through the mist; unheeding we dashed between the rows of peaceful chalets, a group of startled peasants scattering before us, and glided into Chur alongside the lumbering diligence which had passed us by at Langweis. And all the time while the hard snow and ice rattled beneath our runners, while the pace grew swifter and swifter, and the keen air beating in our faces seemed to deaden all sense of sight and sound, we felt, with a glow of triumph as we rounded each dangerous corner, that ours was the power to guide and control this mad whirl of motion. But that ride settled the question debated during the drive. The mist still lies around us, but 'Forwards' is our motto, and Tiefenkasten our goal for the night.

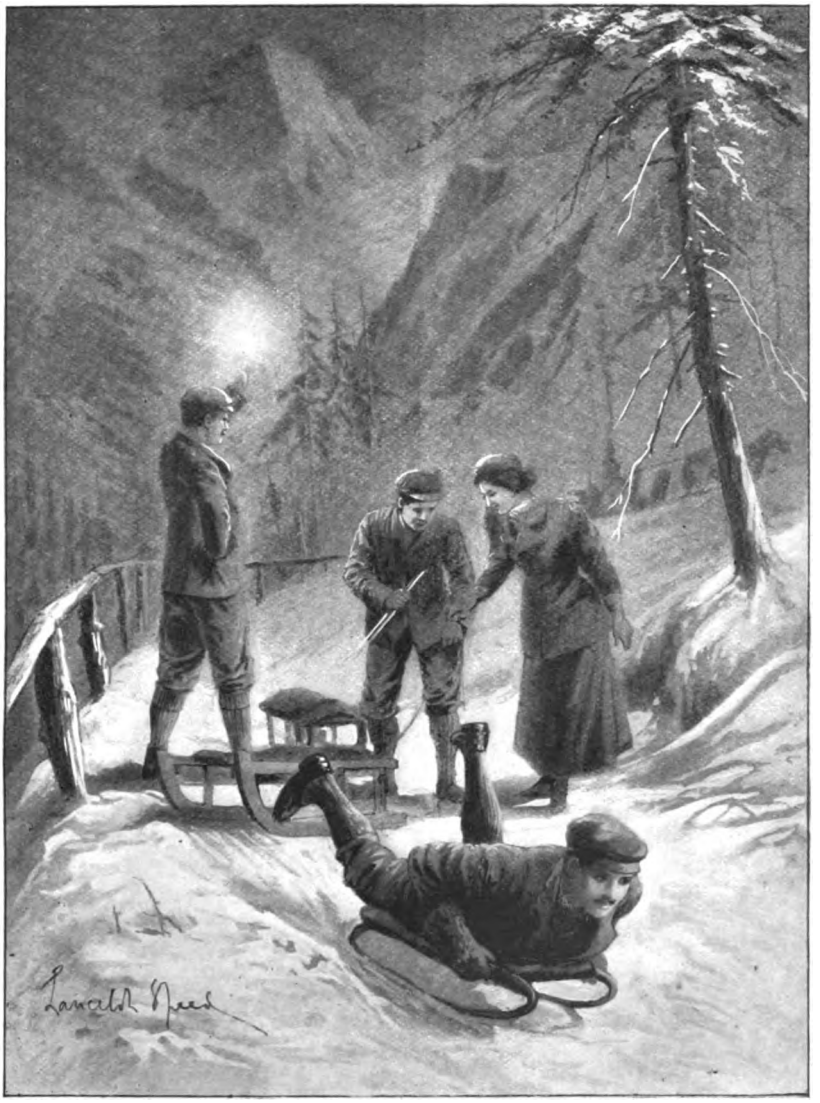
By six o'clock we had changed our wet garments, had swallowed some hot coffee, and were off again. Our way lay up the road to Malix, the scene of our excursion on the previous day. As we ascended the mist grew less dense, and by the time we had reached Churwalden, the next village upwards from Malix, we had left it far behind us, and all around was clear. Still onwards, up the steep hill, past Parpan village till we reach the high-lying plateau of the Lenzerhaide, across which our road leads to Lenz. It is nine o'clock; the moon, still shrouded in clouds, casts a soft light over the desolate tableland; the snowfields stretch away into eerie vagueness, the patches of fir trees stand out black and mysterious, there is no sign nor sound of human being, nothing but an old grey fox startled at our approach, who gallops to his home in the forest; only the music of our sleigh bells ringing in clear and measured cadence through the night.

About a mile from Lenz our drivers pulled up, and told us the incline was steep enough for our *Handschlitten*. We drained a bottle of Bénédictine, the trusty companion of our wanderings, and thus warmed and fortified for our work we felt equal to the four miles' ride. Just as we pushed off the moon burst forth in full glory, chasing the clouds from before her face. At first we crawled slowly along, but as we reached Lenz the speed quickened, and we rushed swiftly through the village street, greatly to the astonishment of the few inhabitants who were still awake. Five strangers on toboggans is a peculiar sight between ten and eleven at night in a Swiss village. Madder and madder grew the race when we had left the hamlet behind. The wooden thing beneath us seems to have quickened into life as it dashes from side to side, as it leaps into a deep furrow and as suddenly bounds out again, and we are borne along, dazed and dreaming, the clear moon above us, the awful stillness of an Alpine night around us, the unknown track before us, winding in zigzags down the hillside. Yet through the confusion of our brain every sense is on the alert. Our eyes peer forth into the moonlight, our ears strain to catch a sound through the silence. Is that a human form that stands dark and motionless by the wayside? No; it is only a leafless bush stretching its bare arms into the night. Is that a hum of many voices in the distance? 'Tis but the torrent far below us, chafing, half ice-bound in its icy bed. On! on! on! Is this earth or is it fairy-land? Are we mortal clay or disembodied spirits? Are we bound for Tiefenkasten or for some unknown goal beyond the reach of human power and human knowledge? We turn a corner, the lights of the village gleam before us, we cross the bridge, the speed slackens, the dream is over! An excellent midnight dinner and downy beds at the Hotel Albüla form a pleasant though prosaic conclusion to this day of many emotions, during which, walking, sleighing, and tobogganing, we had covered a distance of about forty miles.

The next morning we awake with sadness in our hearts, for this is the last day of our tour, and the evening will see us transformed from five Bohemians on toboggans into five respectable visitors to a gay and civilised mountain resort.

But that is in the future. The present still is ours, and we determine to make the best of it in that perfect paradise of tobogganers, Tiefenkasten. The little village lies in a deep hollow, out of which steep mountain slopes rise on every hand. Past the inn door the road winds up the Julier Pass; opposite is the highway from Chur by which we arrived. Beyond the bridge

the Landwasser route leads to Davos, and the Schopestrasse to Thusis, while a steep path zigzags up to Mons village. At ten



THE START FOR A RUN TOWARDS LENZ

o'clock on a winter morning the chief street seems alive with diligences bound for these various destinations. We arrange to make the most of the means of locomotion at our disposal, so we

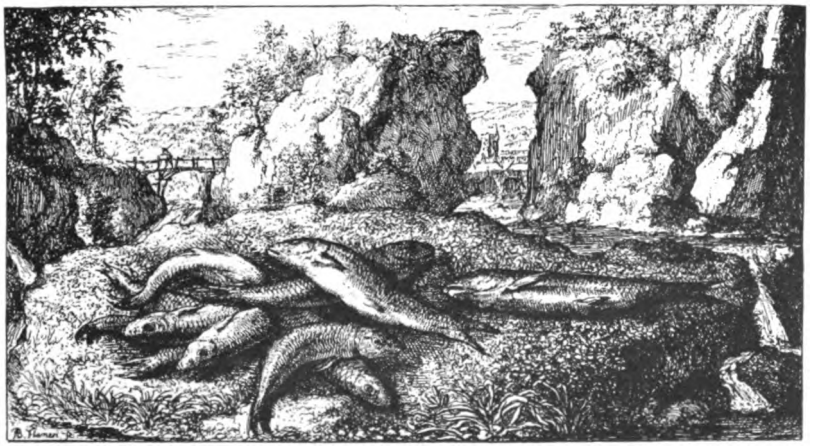
send our luggage on to Davos by one post and reserve seats in another for Burgmein, a cluster of houses two miles up the Julier road. The sun again shines from a cloudless sky as we plod slowly up the pass, our attention fixed on any deep rut or sharp corner likely to prove fatal during the descent. The run, however, turns out to be smooth and very fast, and in six and a half minutes after leaving the top, we are back in Tiefenkasten. Our invalid has recovered, and is once more able to ride his own machine, greatly to the consternation of our landlady at the Albüla, who remarks, in true Swiss fashion, that the position must be most injurious to the digestive organs. We snatch a hurried lunch, catch the one o'clock diligence bound for Chur, and alight at Lenz to repeat our run of the evening before. What a difference between midnight and noon! Viewed in the prosaic light of day our mysterious track appears to be nothing but a well-engineered highway. We manage another short course down to Julier before our einspänners come round at four o'clock to take us to Davos, and we are forced to bid a regretful farewell to Tiefenkasten. We feel we have made the most of our opportunities, though we have been unable to try the course from Mons.

For an hour our way follows the bottom of the valley till we reach a junction of two roads. To our right lies the pass over the Albüla, but we turn to the left and climb slowly up the hillside by desolate snowfields, past clumps of pines, till, skirting along the mountain spurs, we pass through a tunnel in the rock and at last reach Wiesen. There we halt to dine, rest our horses, and await the rising of the moon. Depression sits heavy on our hearts, for this is the very last stage of our expedition. The excitement of the tour is nearly over, and we have time to think of ourselves and to grumble. The owner of the bad knee realises that it still smarts, one lady complains of a headache, the other feels faint, while the two remaining members of the party lay claim to a touch of Indian fever, and to a bad sore throat respectively. The arrival of the moon puts an end to these dismal reflections. She rises pale and wan over the rocky peaks opposite, and gives the signal for departure. We crawl downwards till we again reach the level of the stream, and the Züge gorge yawns before us. Ancient legends of gnomes and evil spirits, and more modern tales of death and devastation from avalanches and landslips, crowd to our minds as we enter the dark defile. The rocks seem to meet overhead, the torrent roars below, the road hewn out of the face of the cliff bores its way

through projecting buttresses. At the entrance to one of the tunnels our horse stops short, awed by the darkness and by the rushing of the water re-echoed from the vaulted roof. A crack, a rattle, a crash, our steed plunges forward, the driver runs to his head. By the feeble flutter of a lucifer match we see that a huge icicle, detached from the arch, lies in fragments close to our sleigh. Somewhat startled, we are thankful when we pass once more into the pale moonlight.

Some six miles from Davos the gorge widens out, houses appear dotted here and there, and our spirits, which had been awed by the solitude and silence of the Züge, begin slowly to revive. We review all the incidents of our tour, and calculate that we have walked and driven eighty-four and a half, and tobogganed forty and a half miles. Profound is our pity for our friends in Davos who had not the good fortune to be of our party, and who will be devoured with envy when they hear of our exploits.

By the time our sleighs pull up at the Belvedere hall-door we are convinced that the sovereign remedy for all evils has been revealed to us, and that overwrought men of law and letters, busy merchants and harassed politicians, could not fail to recover health and vigour, were they to follow our example and take a tobogganing tour in the Canton des Grisons.



LADIES IN THE HUNTING-FIELD

BY LADY MABEL HOWARD

THE winter is in full swing once more, and it appears now only a few moments of time since we had our last spring gallop, and bade good-bye to each other on that sad day, the last of the season, when to look forward to November seemed to be anticipating a long and almost hopeless stretch of months. Yet the summer has been all too short, the hunting season came round with extraordinary rapidity, and again we turn our minds to the business and pleasures of it.

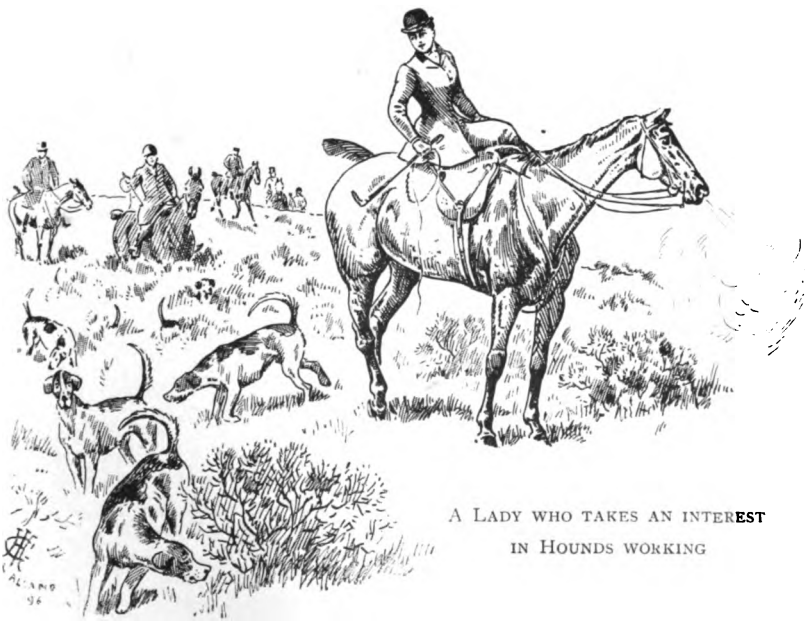
There is always so much to be said about hunting that, notwithstanding the dictum of a typical nineteenth-century child not long ago, that 'nothing in the world could be said which was new or amusing, as everything must have been said already,' I am bold enough, with this discouraging assertion ringing in my ears, to try to add yet a few more remarks to the already well-worn subject.

The day has gone when the lady who hunted was talked of with bated breath, or openly condemned as 'very fast.' These prejudices have disappeared along with the sweeping habits and feathered hats, and although many disapprove and still hold back, yet the majority believe and think that hunting for ladies is compatible, and will go hand-in-hand, with womanly qualities. Of course it can be used or abused; but this is possible with everything in this world, and hunting is what we choose to make it. For those who are keen about it there is no trouble too great, no day too long; distances are as nothing, and all difficulties are overcome; a blank day is soon forgotten, while the smallest

detail of the shortest run is enjoyed and remembered. Ladies who would not venture out in bad weather for anything else will cheerfully ride all day in pouring rain on the offchance of a gallop, even on days which appear, and frequently prove, hopeless for sport.

I am inclined to think, after many years' experience, that the world of hunting ladies may be classed in three divisions. There exists—though she is rare—the lady who is a real sportswoman, who understands the science of hunting, enjoys a slow hunting run, is interested in hounds, and can watch them working on a bad scenting day with pleasure and appreciation; who will ride hard when the time comes, is never in the way, and always sees a run. This lady, as I have said, is rare; but when you do come across her, it is a great pleasure.

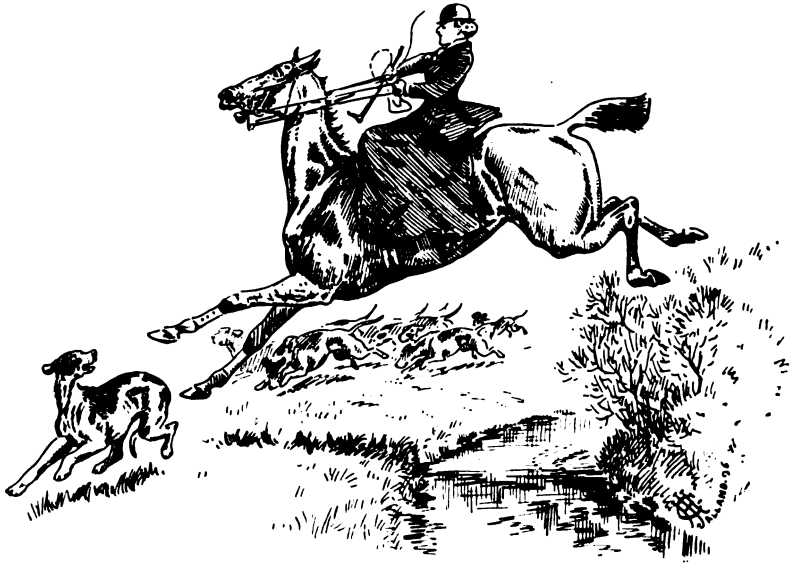
There exists, too, the lady who goes out to steeplechase; who



A LADY WHO TAKES AN INTEREST IN HOUNDS WORKING

dashes from fence to fence, and is utterly regardless as to whether the hounds are hunting the fox, or she is hunting the hounds; if they come in her way at a hedge or rail, she does not hesitate to jump into the midst of them. This type, I think, is the one with which I am almost inclined to fear we are most familiar. I remember only last year the hounds got away by themselves from a large covert, and we spent a maddening half-hour trying to catch them,

gathering news from passers-by as to their whereabouts, eventually coming up to them as they were killing their fox. Turning to a lady who was riding with me, I made a regretful remark about good sport lost; but she replied that she had not discovered we were without hounds, and had enjoyed very much



ONE WHO HAS NO REGARD FOR HOUNDS

what she thought was an excellent run. I was really quite sorry for having undeceived her, but I venture to think she would be happier with, and more suited to, a drag or a paper-chase.

Then there is the third and last class of lady, who comes out to chatter, to show off her horse and her habit, and to take home the latest news. I met a typical one last year. She got in the way at all the gaps, and when a man kindly held a gate open for her, and her horse kicked his, her only expression of regret was, 'Oh dear!' This lady invariably looks over the other side of the fences, and tremulously asks 'if there is a ditch?' The first shower, happily, drives her home, and as she generally gives her horse a sore back, her days are few and far between; if she stayed away altogether 'she never would be missed.'

A first day! a first fence! what a record they make; and does any good run in after-life ever quite come up to that? though I am not sure that the retrospect of one's first day's hunting is not better than was the actual thing itself. Every detail of it

remains still fresh, and to the unsophisticated girl of seventeen, who has never before seen hounds, it is a day of wonder and excitement, not unmixed with a little dread. I remember so well the first time I was offered a mount, and my reckless acceptance of it, the almost sleepless night, the constant wakings towards early morning, with that well-known and often experienced sensation of 'something going to happen,' and the impatient listening for the first footsteps which would proclaim the house awakening, followed by the anxiety as to whether my habit and hat were not rather odd, and a dread lest any should detect me as a novice. I smile now when I think of how intensely important it all appeared to be, and for the time really was. I felt quite astonished at breakfast, and almost shocked, by the healthy appetites of my fellow-hunters, wondering how they could be so calm, and apparently so oblivious of what was before them.

GETS IN THE WAY AT ALL THE GAPS

After what seemed to me an endless time, the last flask and the missing whip were found, spurs put on, and we were off. My big, sixteen-hands grey, on to which I climbed with great difficulty, was extremely determined; he evidently understood his duty and

business, and would brook no interference from me. At first I endeavoured to have my way, but I found it perfectly useless, and decided to allow him a free rein. He insisted upon going from covert to covert alongside of the last two or three tail hounds, and when I ventured to turn him away from them, showed such temper that I had to give in, notwithstanding the angry looks of huntsmen and whips, who evidently thought me extremely forward for daring to ride in the first ranks. However, this did not last long; suddenly, for the first time, I heard the now familiar and gladdening cry of 'Gone away.' I looked round to see what was going to happen next, when my grey, at the sound of the horn, cocked his ears, and started. I was relieved to see the master, my pilot (who, by the way, thoroughly disapproved of ladies hunting, but had been coerced by his wife into giving me a mount), in front. Rising before us was what seemed to me an impossible hedge, with rails run through—the kind of obstacle so often seen on Christmas cards representing hunting scenes, but one I never thought could be feasible for a horse in real life. 'Sit back!' shouted my pilot, as the grey quickened his pace, and with a snort prepared for the fence. I breathed hard: one hand instinctively caught the pommel, while the other tightened the reins; there was an awful moment—we seemed to be rocking in mid air; I shut my eyes, and felt that all was over with me, and when I opened them I was astounded to find we were galloping across the next field, I still in the saddle—perhaps not quite straight in it, but we had not parted company, and that was all that mattered. I began to feel reassured.

On we went, over a post and rails, several hedges, and, once, a brook of considerable size. That time I certainly left the saddle, but somehow I landed on it again, and once more took breath. Now and then I heard a friendly voice saying 'Don't go over that,' but I was too exhausted to answer that I had no power, no control, and that I would have given worlds to have been able to go another way, or, best of all, to stop going at all. I was gasping for breath; the fields, the fences, the trees were all rolled into one confused mass, dancing before my eyes, and I felt that, if the run did not soon come to an end, I should fall off from giddiness and exhaustion.

At last there was an unearthly yell. I can call it nothing else; my horse pulled up, and I was told the fox was killed. My hat was hanging over one ear, my veil was left in a tree, my hair was half down my back, and I must have presented a sorry appearance; but the sense of this was lost in the intense relief of

knowing that, the fox being dead, the grey would condescend to stay where he was.

The master, approaching me with a smile, offered me my first fox's brush; and here, I grieve to say, I made a fatal mistake, for which even now I blush. In a loud voice, so that all could hear, I cried, 'Oh, thank you; I never thought I should get a fox's tail.' And no sooner had I said it than I saw the pitying, condescending smile on all faces. I felt that everyone knew that it was my first day, and that I had given myself away.

But, still, it was a day of triumph, and as I write the brush still faces me on the opposite wall, though there is little of it left now but a bone and a memory.

The strange and often ridiculous experiences of many seasons come across me as I sit thinking, and one New Year's Day is uppermost in my mind—a New Year's Eve in the master of the hounds' house. He, smiling over his port wine, announced his intention of taking us all to open the New Year with his hounds. The difficulties of distance appeared to be great; but his mind had grappled with them, and one early train was to convey him and a friend to the kennels, to breakfast and to pick up their horses, while we were to follow in a later one, taking our horses with us. His brother-in-law (whom later on I discovered arrived every November on a so-called week's visit, which he fully intended to prolong into one of six months—an intention which with great persistence he carried into effect) offered my hostess and myself a lift to the station in the village cart, which he had ordered for himself. The next morning, shivering with cold, we stood on the doorstep in the half-dawn, secretly doubting whether even hunting was worth it, waiting for the vehicle, which showed no sign of coming. We gave it as long as we could, but as there was still no sign, we looked at each other, and, silently shouldering our bags and rugs, ran slowly down the avenue, in the hope of meeting it. At the entrance to the village we saw a strange sight. A whole family appeared to be adjusting straps and harness to a most long-suffering-looking horse. The delinquent driver, who had evidently just been torn from his bed, stood helplessly beside it. His father was engaged in placing his hat on the back of his head, while his younger brother enveloped him in a coat. As we approached he was almost lifted on to the box, the reins put between his fingers, and a rug hastily thrown over him, from under which his stockingless toes emerged. It all mattered little as long as we caught the train, and it was much too serious then to contemplate the

comic side. We flung ourselves in amongst our wraps, and were driven at that sort of swinging slow gallop which only a hired horse in a springless carriage can accomplish with any success. We were absolutely silent; the brother-in-law remained with his eyes fixed on the driver, and I felt that, if he did break forth into words, they would not be parliamentary. However, we were more lucky than we deserved to be—the signals were only just going down as we galloped into the station. But here a new surprise awaited us, and we saw our host, whom we had thought a long way on his journey, standing on the platform—having missed his train by two minutes—his marvellous temper still unruffled as he announced with a smile: 'If only the beastly thing hadn't been punctual it would have been all right.' With a great deal of persuasion he had succeeded in wringing a promise from the station-master to stop the express at his station; so he too had come out of his misfortunes better than he had dared to hope. His friend did not seem to be bearing it quite so well; he was huddled up on a seat, fur collar well turned up, a picture of cold misery, and I feel sure, if he had been offered the chance, he would gladly have gone home.

After these agitations we proceeded on our way, congratulating ourselves that our misfortunes, begun in the dark, had ceased, as we hoped, with the rising of the sun. But the climax was still to come; for, on going leisurely to unbox our horses, we found there was one horse-box short: our hostess's hunter was being swept away by the departing train. In vain we all—porter, station-master, his wife adding her shrill voice—whistled and shouted; the train disappeared, and we were left minus a horse. My friend telegraphed on, and pursued in a goods train, and as we could do nothing to help her, we left her and went on to the meet. We were rewarded by a good gallop, but we felt almost too exhausted by the morning's troubles to be able fully to enjoy it. However, we returned home in better spirits ,and drank success to the New Year and confusion to the railway companies.

A curious incident that occurred when hunting with another pack of hounds comes before me, and is perhaps worth relating. We had drawn blank from eleven in the morning till three in the afternoon, huntsman and hounds alike were beginning to despair, when suddenly in a grass field we most unexpectedly hit off a line, which we imagined must be a travelling fox. Hounds took it up, and, settling down, fairly raced him for ten minutes, finally bowling him over in the open. While the hounds were actually beginning to break him up we heard sounds

THE STOLEN FOX

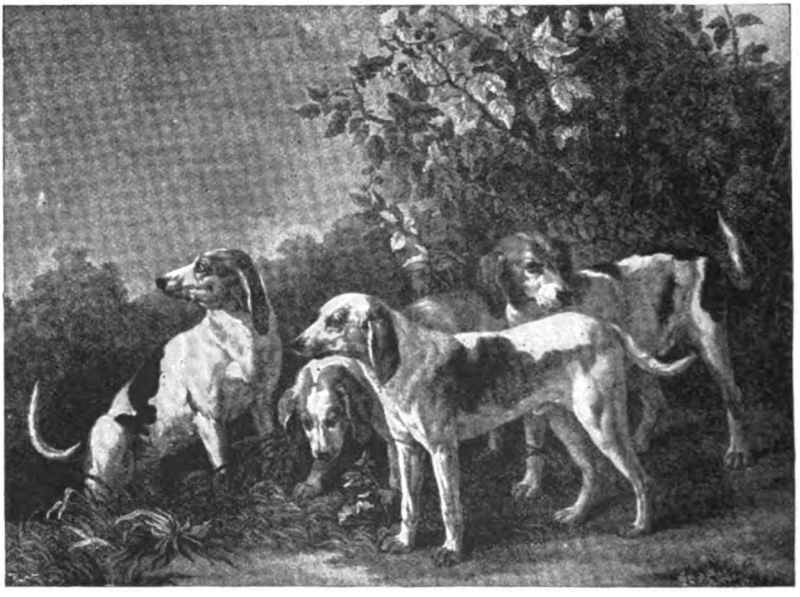
approaching us, and to our astonishment were joined by the neighbouring pack of hounds, whose fox we had run and killed. We heard afterwards that it had been their run of the season. The masters were the first to recover; after a little hesitation, at their suggestion, the respective huntsmen shook hands, and the two packs enjoyed the fox together.

The great question as to the future fate of hunting has agitated, and is still agitating, the minds of those interested in the sport, and it is believed by many that, gradually, it will cease to exist. The large fields, bad trade, bad agricultural seasons, and the ever-increasing wire fencing, all tend to encourage this

A LADY WHO HUNTS

idea, and threaten to put an end to hunting, a sport which has for so long existed in this country. Nothing, probably, can or will ever take its place. For ladies especially the cessation of hunting would be a severe blow. It is the only sport they can really take part in to any great extent. A few have gone in for shooting, some fish with fair success, and a good many try to play the game of cricket; but in hunting alone are they really successful, and can equal, and even on occasions surpass, men, in spite of the impediments of habits, pommels, and a one-sided balance. But we each selfishly hope and think that hunting will last our time; beyond that we do not attempt to prophesy—the next generation must make or mar it for themselves. Perhaps the 'new woman' of thirty

years hence will despise it as too frivolous and time-wasting. Public platforms will be her recreation-ground, the bicycle or motor-car her means of conveyance; she will play golf and cricket in rational costume for the sake of health, and she will not feel the disappearance of fox and hounds. But we of this generation still cling a little to the ancient traditions of our race, and we wish with all our hearts a happy New Year--ay, and many of them—to the national sport of England, and to all who are worthy of it.



NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

ISINGLASSIANA is, of course, popular in Newmarket, and having had a look at the great horse lately, I naturally heard some stories about him. There is always much discussion as to how such horses should be treated in the matter of exercise, and I know it will interest some of my readers to hear that Isinglass is hacked about for two or three hours a day, led by Whisperer, his old associate. Except an occasional buck at starting, just for fun—he would not do anything to displease his boy Jim, who sleeps in his box, and has very seldom left him, day or night, for the last four years—he is a charming hack, rather lazy than otherwise, indeed. He weighed at the beginning of December 1,114 lb.; he stands 16 hands 1¼ inch; is 6 ft. 4 in. in girth, and 8¾ in. below the knee.

—•—

An old Yorkshire farmer called on Jewitt shortly before Isinglass left Bedford Cottage, and begged permission to see the horse, having, as he told the trainer, come all the way from the north of Yorkshire for that purpose. One likes to find such an enthusiast in these material times, and Jewitt, devoted to his

charge as he is, was specially delighted. He led the old man to the box, and there they stayed while the visitor inspected the horse with critical attention from every point of view. Some twenty minutes passed; the farmer walked round and round, sat down in different corners, gazed to his heart's content, and at length broke the silence. 'Well!' he said at length, 'there's only one fault in him!' 'Fault!' Jewitt exclaimed; 'what fault? What fault can you find in him?' for Jewitt thinks him faultless. 'He can't live for ever!' was the old man's reply.

Every man who shoots knows the dissatisfied head-keeper, whose invariable complaint is that the bag would have been much bigger had his master's friends shot only moderately well. I heard of such an one the other day in, let me say, Covertshire, where the woods are on rising ground, with valleys between, over which the birds come really high. Several hundred were killed on the occasion of a certain shoot, and the gunners were rather pleased with themselves than otherwise; but the keeper was not at all contented. 'I thought there'd have been half as many again,' he added, when he announced the total. 'We ought to have got a lot more, sir. I'm afraid the gentlemen couldn't have been holding very straight!' Now the host knew that the gentlemen *had* been holding straight, and, indeed, that they had done particularly well, having regard to the real difficulties of the shoot; and, being rather tired of this sort of criticism, which was a matter of course whatever might have been killed, he devised a little plan.

Sending for the keeper a few days afterwards, he said: 'I want some birds to send away for Christmas, and I shall not be able to shoot myself; you must get them for me; I suppose some of your men are good shots?' 'Yes, sir,' the keeper replied, 'two or three of them are very tidy, and if you would not mind my brother coming, he's first rate.' The brother was head-keeper on an estate some ten miles away. 'You are very good, too, aren't you?' his master asked; and 'Well, sir, I don't know about "very good,"' he answered, with an assumption of modesty; 'I fancy I'm pretty fair.' 'Very well, ask your brother,' was the reply; 'take two or three of your best men and get, say, fifty brace, from the Coombe coverts.' (This was where the birds came high.)

The shoot was organised, and, as it may be guessed, not without due care; the men took their places, and presently the master, who was not far off, heard a very lively and sustained fusillade. There was a pause while the beaters changed over to the opposite covert, and the fusillade began again; certainly a great many cartridges were fired. Soon after the shooting had stopped the master appeared on the scene and asked how things were going? 'Why, sir, we've had very hard luck with the birds; the men can't get them over at all to-day, somehow,' answered the keeper, who was not looking at all pleased or happy. 'Oh! How many have you got?' the master inquired. 'Why, sir, there's only thirteen picked up. I can't think what's the matter with the birds!' 'I'll tell you what's the matter,' was the reply; 'you can't shoot them. As for not coming well, I chanced to see for myself that they came beautifully. The few you got were knocked over at the corner, and were all easy shots, but of the really high birds not one of you has touched a feather. I was just curious to know what you really could do, and now I have seen. Probably for the future you will be less severely critical about the shooting of gentlemen who come here and kill about six birds to your one!'

I have once more asked a friend for whose judgment I have special respect to give me his views about the leading two-year-olds; and after some preliminary remarks which I may here omit he goes on to ask, 'Did Velasquez show us his best form in the Middle Park Plate, or was he a bit "off" that day? Will he turn the tables on Galtee More in the Derby as Persimmon did on St. Frusquin? I hardly think so; nor do I fancy that he will even beat Vesuvian, who, for all we know, may be the best of the three. Galtee More's running in the Middle Park made a great impression on me, so I will frame my handicap as follows:

	st.	lb.
Galtee More	9	0
Vesuvian	8	10
Velasquez	8	7

I cannot think such as Eager and Orelio can have any chance with these, though I believe his trainer looks for much improvement in the last named. Chelándry is quite the best of the fillies, but she comes of a breed that is generally never so good again as at two years old, so I do not think we can confidently anticipate a great future for her.'

Last year the friend whom I have quoted was singularly right, and I was very wrong, so that I feel a natural diffidence in expressing my own views, opposed as they are to his. With the exception of the Middle Park Plate, however, Velasquez won all his races in the handsomest possible fashion, and on the other hand, some of Galtee More's performances were not far removed from the moderate. I went into the question last month, but discussion on it is so keenly pursued that I may perhaps be excused for touching it again. What we have to ask is whether there is any explanation of the Middle Park Plate running which would afford a reasonable excuse for Velasquez; and I think there is—the ground. As a general rule, it is probably wise to ignore excuses of all kinds; but there is no doubt that some horses cannot 'act' in very heavy 'going,' as also that a horse which may not always be affected by the state of the ground may for once lose his balance and get all abroad. It seems to me hasty to condemn a horse for one failure when all the rest of his work has been brilliant; and I am inclined to rate Velasquez not only higher than he is in my friend's handicap, but as the best of his year. That he is not growing much, or making conspicuous improvement, is, I am bound to add, however, the opinion of some of those who have lately seen him.

As for Vesuvian, we have to take him a good deal on trust. Winning the Dewhurst Plate as he did was undoubtedly a good performance; but he had failed at home to do what John Porter asked him. Berzak ran second to both Velasquez (in the Champagne Stakes) and Vesuvian (in the Dewhurst); Velasquez at even weights beat the American colt quite as easily at Doncaster as Vesuvian, with 4 lb. in his favour, did at Newmarket; so that on form I should myself be inclined to reverse the positions of the two in my friend's handicap. But I had what appeared to me equally good arguments about Regret and St. Frusquin last year, and I was wrong; indeed, looked at by the light of subsequent knowledge, the ideas of those of us who believed in Regret now, of course, seem absurd. Although it was his first appearance in public, Vesuvian certainly did not run green. Personally, however, I am not greatly enamoured of his sire's stock. The prominent Royal Hamptons, now that Omladina has gone, are Court Ball, Kirkconnel, and Royal Corrie, and they are all very 'shifty.' I am afraid the rumour is true that Orelio, the own brother to Ormonde, is unsound in his wind, and when horses once begin to make a

noise, it is impossible to say what may happen except that they are most unlikely to win good races. Eager could barely stay four furlongs last year, and that looks hopeless for his prospect of winning important races this season. With regard to the fillies, to prognosticate how a two-year-old may turn out as a three-year-old is futile.

'No poetry' is one of the rules of this Magazine, because it seems to me that everybody writes magazine verse and no one reads it. But the following wild and whirling Walt-Whitmanesque poem, sent me by Mr. E. H. Lacon-Watson—who has recently published a clever little book of verse—strikes me as so quaint and genuinely humorous that I really must give it; and to do this in my Notes is not quite to break through the 'no poetry' rule.

I SING OF FOOTBALL

I sing of Football, not amateur only but professional;
I am the poet of the amateur, but of the professional also—North as well as South—leagues, unions, scratch teams.
I utter occasionally strange words—the word 'Democratic,' the word 'En-Masse'
(Both good words, 'En-Masse' perhaps the better).

Rugby, Association I sing.
Nothing is apart from me, nothing foreign to me. I sing everything I can find with which I am imperfectly acquainted.
(And Heaven knows I find enough subjects!)
I lean and loaf at my ease observing a football match.

Who are playing, you ask?
I do not know: it is nothing to me—Corinthians, Preston North End, Richmond, Sunderland, Bolton Wanderers, Blackheath, or Aston Villa.
The laws of the game I know not, I do not care.
They run, they kick the ball, they buffet each other violently, they roll in the mud.
I do not ask any more delight, it is enough for me.

The sprawl of the full-back as he kicks at the ball and misses it, sitting down with inexpressible completeness;
The short sharp turn of the forward eluding his adversary, baffling, mocking, leaping with quick jerks;

The marvellous combination of the three-quarters running along the touch-line;
The quick rally in front of goal, legs mingled inextricably, the dangerous shot, the conceding of a corner,
The impetuous rush at the goal-keeper (no skulk in his place, though having little to do during the first half of the game),
The swish of the ball in the net.

Serene stands the little referee.
He is not hurried, he is not even excited; his voice is neither high nor low.
One man hits another in the stomach; he orders them both off the field for fighting.
The crowd hiss; there is every probability of a rumpus.
'If you throw things at me,' he composedly cries, 'I will close the ground for a twelvemonth.'
He gives it a try, offside.

THE

BADMINTON MAGAZINE

February 1897

FATHER O'TOOLE

BY A. G. BRADLEY

It was a great day for the estate of Ballyroan and for the peace of mind of my good friend Tom, otherwise Thomas Cassidy, Esq., J.P., its owner, when a conviction was secured against Father O'Toole for trespass in pursuit of game. It was not, however, the trifling punishment meted out for this 'first offence' (and how the Court grinned all over from roof to floor at the whimsical formula!) that caused relief, for the fine and caution were a small affair. But it brought upon the scene a higher power than landlords or keepers, who transported the reverend gentleman to spheres of work where sport was inaccessible. The ecclesiastical authorities had long known of the holy man's partiality for carrying a gun at all hazards, and it was whispered were only too glad of an excuse to remove him from all temptation, and place him where his sporting proclivities could no longer be a cause of scandal to the Church. Father O'Toole's chapel is now situated, I am told, in the slummiest part of Dublin, and no one would deny that this poor martyr to duty is deserving of considerable sympathy.

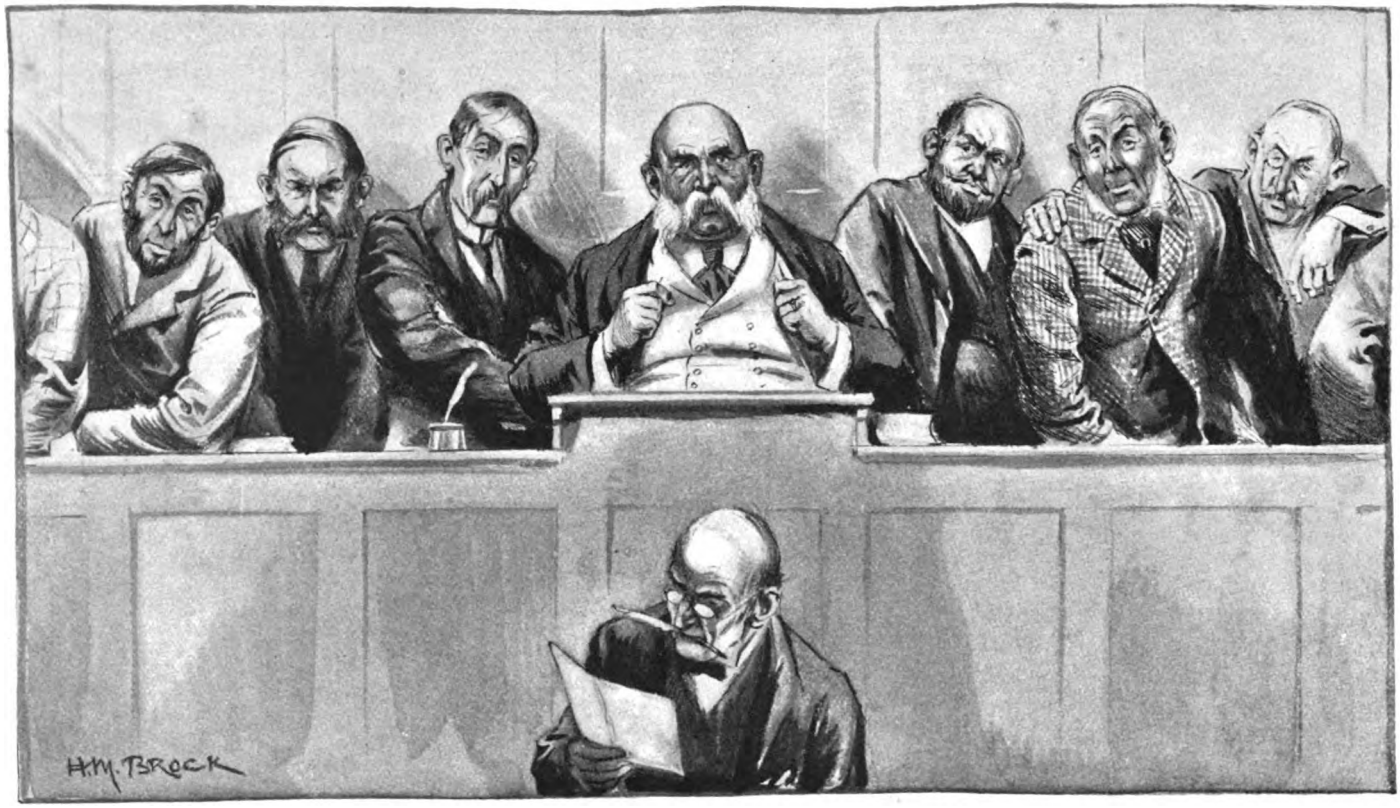
It must be at least five years since Father O'Toole so reluctantly relieved the western end of the Ballyroan estate of his presence, and in spite of his popular manners the relief was, I think, felt by all, from the owner to the raggedest gossoon. The former and his officials were wearied of their fruitless hunts after the wily cleric, and the 'people' were, I think, getting a bit tired of the

tacit assistance they had to give to their priest's sporting vagaries.

The whole estate most certainly breathed more freely when Father O'Toole had departed with his gun and his brace of black pointers. Liver-and-white dogs for obvious reasons were not in favour with his reverence, while the wide-ranging and headstrong red setter had disadvantages for so astute a sportsman that may readily be inferred.

And yet the sporting priest was, in other respects, such a first-rate fellow; it had made his suppression all the harder. And, indeed, I think if he had only been content to knock over a brace or two of birds and a few snipe or an odd hare now and again, Tom would have winked at it, or, very likely, asked him to shoot. But Father O'Toole was a gentleman who shot for sport, not for a modest addition to his larder, and who really enjoyed, I think, the excitement incidental to shooting over other people's property without leave. Now game in Ireland is game, partridges and grouse are precious as they are scarce, and it was simply grievous to Con O'Sullivan, the half keeper, half farmer, to have his wide but thinly-stocked beat subject to the continuous depredations of so elusive and efficient a sportsman.

'Father O'Toole's the divil, and may Heaven forgive me for that same word,' Con used to say, as four birds went away out of a covey that a day or two before had consisted of eight. His reverence was a thorn indeed in the side of Con, who was always eager to show his master birds. He was only a half keeper, it is true, the other half of him being a farmer, with a very large beat to watch, and no machinery to assist, or public opinion, of course, to back him. By anyone who knows Ireland, it will be readily understood why it was three years before Con saw reasonable hope of a conviction in this case, and got it. Con was a devout Catholic, and till Father O'Toole's arrival was a staunch Nationalist. Afterwards, however, I think, he would even have turned Protestant if he had dared, so greatly was he stirred up on the subject of his spiritual overseer. He did what he could do, however, and that was to embrace the Parnellite faction with such zeal as to be credited with breaking more Macarthyite heads than any man in the barony. The wide range and the mountainous nature of Con's beat had been his difficulty. Again and again he had seen with the naked eye what he knew was Father O'Toole and his dogs at the edge of the bog or on the slope of the mountain; but every man's hand was *ex officio*, and by an unwritten law, upon the side of the priest, and opposed, so far as his business



THE BENCH

went, to Con, so that he had never yet succeeded in getting face to face with this sporting padre and catching him *in flagrante delicto*.

Con, however, was a man of resource and was not to be beaten. It was the autumn of 1890, if I remember rightly, when the whole barony was thrilled by the news that a summons had been taken out against Father O'Toole for trespass in pursuit of game. The Court House at sessions was crowded. The feelings of the crowd would have been hard to analyse, but they were by no means wholly of the kind that would have filled such an audience in Clare or Mayo on a like occasion; they would, perhaps, have been best described as one of interested amusement. For if the priest was popular on account of his position, Tom was equally so in spite of his, while Con had by no means forfeited the confidence of the Parnellites by being a conscientious and zealous keeper.

The bench was crowded as well as the court. Ten magistrates were firmly wedged into the rude judicial pew that would not hold seven comfortably, as I knew by experience, having many times partaken of its hospitable accommodation when some specially inviting drama was about to be played. General MacRustler, of Ballinskellig, I remember, was in the chair. And the General, who was too often accustomed to bear the burden and heat of the day alone, or almost alone, at Killconnel Sessions, glared round to right and left at his fine-weather brethren, who as a rule only turned out to his assistance when some entertainment was in store. The General posed as a martyr to duty, but there is no doubt that he passed his Thursdays on the bench with an immense enjoyment, though he dissembled it so basely. He cracked jokes with witnesses, solicitors, prisoners, and even dropped into long discussions on agriculture, of which he was a great patron, with the very men whose crimes he was supposed to be in process of investigating. He was the terror of any brother magistrates who were anxious to get home to lunch, and even the sport he afforded in no way compensated the court officials, the constables, sub-inspectors, and witnesses for the delays he entailed upon them. The General, without any accurate statistics of either his surface measurement or tonnage, was, in truth, an enormous man. And on this occasion, in his capacity of chairman, sitting exactly in the middle of his eight coadjutors, he took pains, I remember, to make himself as aggressively large as possible. He had no appearance of being crowded himself, but his *confrères* seemed to be sitting on each other's knees as best they could.

The case proceeded amid breathless interest. Con described the place on which he was standing when he saw Father O'Toole fire at a covey in a potato patch, go forward and pick up two birds, and proceed afterwards to fire several shots on the edge of the bog. He was standing in the stackyard of one of the few Protestant farmers on the estate; the tenant was with him at the time and would bear out his statement, for he had no fear of Father O'Toole. The points were well known to most of the Court, and his evidence was being listened to with breathless attention. 'And so,' said Father O'Toole's solicitor, a well-known local character, with bright-red hair, a port-wine nose, a sky-blue necktie, and a brogue you could cut with a knife, 'and so,' said he, opening his cross-examination, 'you mane to persuade this Coort that from where you were standing at Coolnamarn you could identify my client on the edge of Ballinragget bog. Sure, and there's not a mother's son in this coort but knows well that from Michael Heffeman's stackyard to Patsy Dillon's tillage is a good Irish mile.' The attorney looked up at the Bench with a superior smile, and glanced round the court with an air of having already achieved a triumph too ridiculously easy to waste further time upon; and a ripple of derision from every side endorsed a fact so conclusive.

'And now,' said he to Con, after leaving him a few seconds to feel the hopelessness of his position, 'don't you think you're a nice sort of fellow?'

'I do,' says Con; 'and if I was not on my oath I'd say the same of you.'

This sally was received with such applause that the tall constables had to take measures to suppress it.

It was the attorney's turn now to feel small, for the sympathy of the audience swung round in a moment against him, for all his indisputable facts.

'Perhaps, *Misther* Cornelius—I beg pardon, Misther Constantine O'Sullivan,' continued the attorney in a mincing voice, 'will now be kind enough to inform the Coort by what supernatural agency he conthrives to tell the colour of a gintleman's complexion across an Irish mile.'

There was another outburst of applause at this, in which the Bench, all but the General, joined, and the priest's attorney was once more in the ascendant.

But Con did not smile. He was a very tall, big-boned man, with a head as bare as a billiard ball, a heavy square Milesian jaw, bushy eyebrows, and the regulation patch of whisker under the

ear so much affected by the Irish peasantry. He wore a long-tail coat, out at both elbows, as became a man in good circumstances, such as he was. While the Court were laughing good-humouredly at his seeming discomfiture, a solemn quizzical expression had stolen over the keeper's face. The furrows on his forehead were so tightly compressed that his bushy eyebrows stuck out like horns, and his lips pursed up with the extra difficulty occasioned by an over-generous supply of finely neglected teeth, giving Con an air of preternatural gravity. This, however, was accompanied by a leisurely investigation of the pocket in the tail of his long coat. He was fumbling, indeed, with the absorbed air of a man hunting for his latchkey at two o'clock in the morning. The solicitor was standing smirking with folded arms, and the Court were waiting for Con's answer to the poser which had been put to him. But that great man appeared to be wholly interested in his engrossing search.

A LEISURELY INVESTIGATION OF THE POCKET

'Oi have it, yer honours!' he at length said to the Bench, who had become as interested as the audience; and that Con was a humourist as well as a man of infinite resource will, I am sure, be conceded when I relate how he drew from the skirts of his antediluvian garment a weapon that might have been a weaver's beam, but which developed into a spyglass of portentous dimensions. Con said nothing; his silence was more eloquent than words, as he held it aloft for all to see, and in a theatrical but dignified fashion shook it at the head of Father O'Toole and his discomfited solicitor.

There is no need to pursue the details. His reverence was fairly run to earth this time. It was a 'first offence' (the Court grinned all over at the unintentional joke, and under so comical an imputation, the holy man himself grew quite purple in the face in his endeavours to look sympathetic). The punishment was, of course, trifling—a small fine and a caution. But that was

not the point. For the bishop, as we have already indicated, lost no time in discovering that he had need of the sporting priest's services elsewhere, and the land had peace.

But all this happened five years ago, and is only after all a preamble to my little story. For in this I profess to show how, in spite of the young man who succeeded to Father O'Toole's white cottage by the chapel at Drumnaslee being reputed a model of propriety and sporting innocence, we were as badly sold one day this very last year as if the poaching padre had still been in full possession.

Peace, as I have said, had reigned for years over mountain, bog, and stubble on the Ballyroan estate. Con had grown younger, and Father O'Toole was but a jocose memory in the land. There had been no poaching worth mentioning, and when we put up a fresh covey which nature or the hawks had reduced to, say, half a dozen birds, we always used to call it one of Father O'Toole's. In fact, the memory of the sporting priest had grown almost an endearing one, so mellowed had his misdeeds become by time.

This past season was a poor one for birds in that belt of country on which the Ballyroan estate lay. The twentieth, not the first, of September is the opening day of partridge shooting in the distressful country, and it was about the last of the month when we pulled up with guns and dogs in front of Con's door for the first essay over the big mountain beat that was specially in his charge. We were only ourselves, as usual, for two guns and a brace of dogs is far the pleasantest as well as the most successful combination for pursuing the Irish partridge. Even under such conditions, and with straight holding, ten or twelve brace of these elusive and none too plentiful birds is a good day's sport. I mention this because, when Con's report as to birds was as gloomy as on this occasion, there appeared really great consolation in hearing that he had actually walked himself into a covey of fourteen birds the evening before on Billy Fagan's stubble. It would be nearly lunch time, however, before we should arrive at that remote but delectable spot. Under ordinary circumstances we should expect to 'meet,' as they say in Ireland, three or four coveys on the way; but Con was very low about his stock, and in this wild upland country partridge shooting, though immensely enjoyable, was a somewhat uncertain quantity. Con's dejection was not ill-founded. We hunted in vain the likely spots of other years. The dogs, and there were none better in Ireland, ranged with care and diligence over the ragged pasture fields, the big enclosures, where heather, gorse, and rushes ran riot among

the sedgy grass. The strips of tillage where potatoes, swedes, and barley all lay within the same enclosure of gorse-covered banks were diligently searched. The slope of the mountain itself, with its all-pervading mantle of heather, was tried as a last resource. We saw plenty of wild grouse and shot a few odd snipe and a hare or two; but only one small covey of partridges, which could hardly afford the tribute of three birds we exacted, broke the long blank of the morning. We met our usual friends, sanguine farmers who had seen the usual 'great pack' the day before, but even they romanced in a fashion quite half-hearted and unlike their usually cheery method of fiction. I thought I once heard a couple of shots, very faint and far off, but neither Tom's nor Con's ears caught the sound, so we concluded it was fancy, and, indeed, if not, they might have come from over the boundary, so the incident was hardly worth mentioning, and was soon forgotten.

It was past noon when we arrived at a small hollow in the hills, full of tillage and pasture fields which were overlooked by the four or five houses of the tenants who worked them. This was Fagan's, and here was Con's covey of fourteen birds for certain, anyhow, for Con did not invent coveys like his neighbours. He was only a 'half keeper,' as already remarked, but he understood his business, and could not afford fancies of the kind. Above us stretched away the long sweep of the mountain. Below us the trend of the slope followed on towards the low country, a succession of rough pastures intersected by broken banks, patches of gorse, and clusters of thorn trees. The little colony of homesteads was quite an oasis, and it would have been a bad season indeed that would find it a blank draw. 'A little is precious to those who have nothing,' as the old proverb says, and we felt all the joys of anticipation as we jumped off the boundary fence into the fresh stubble. Con's testimony in these matters required no verification. If it had done so, there was plenty of it, for fresh marks of a big covey were everywhere. We had them beyond a doubt in the hollow of our hand. We tried a potato patch, we tried the swedes, then a strip of mangel, then two likely paddocks, after which, his face beaming with excitement, down comes Tim Callahan.

'Have you met the birds, yer honour? I seen 'em this blessed morning on the barley stubble. They're a great pack, sorr, and there's sixteen birds in it, glory be.'

'No, not yet, Tim,' says his master; 'but look out! There they are! Steady, Grouse, have a care!' for there was Dash

standing as stiff as a reed at a gorse thicket that straggled over a bank, just such a place as Irish partridges love to huddle in about the middle of the day. We forgot our labours and disappointments, hastened to the spot, and with guns at the ready cast our eyes round to see how many of Fagan's and Callahan's relations were standing on various fence tops within range. Callahan himself was told to down charge—the only way with a sporting rustic in Ireland—and Tom gave the still motionless dog a hint with his foot that we were ready. There was a great flutteration; but instead of a big covey, a solitary bird only rose, and just as I was about to pull on it, the six-foot form of Billy Fagan, of course, reared itself upon the fence exactly behind the line. The bird was grassed with a long shot, but that is a detail.

'That's queer!' said Tom. And so it was, that a covey should be broken up at noonday within two hundred yards of a house. Still it was not extraordinary, and in the field beyond, which was a pasture of long wiry grass sprinkled freely with patches of gorse, we thought we should probably find them. Billy Fagan, of course, knew the covey. 'He had never seen such a pack,' he said, 'the saints be praised!' He was quite sure we should find the rest of them in the pasture, and so was Tim Callahan. And, indeed, we ourselves never doubted that a few minutes would see us in the thick of the fun. Con was slowly polishing his shining head with a big bandana handkerchief, a habit he had when perplexed. The dog had covered half the field, and there was no sign of the birds. 'That's moighty quare!' says Tim. 'Sure, an a hawk would have squandered them, Misther Tom,' says Billy. 'Then it's a human hawk,' says Tom curtly, and pointed to a bunch of fresh partridge feathers resting on a furze bush. 'And he's been here this morning, too; those feathers are quite fresh—there has been no dew on them.' A few yards further on was another unmistakable trace of where a bird had fallen on the gorse.

'Now Billy,' says Tom, 'who has been shooting these birds this morning?'

'Misther Tom, sorr,' taking his hat off to give greater solemnity to the occasion, 'there's not bin a gun fired on this place since yer honour was here last year, and sure I wouldn't tell yer honour an untruth for the world, Heaven bless you!' Tim, in a hurry to anticipate his landlord's query, chimed in with still more emphatic protests as to the sanctity with which his birds had been regarded by everyone in the settlement.

Tom was standing with his gun over his shoulder, his hat on the back of his head, and an expression on his face of such solemn

bewilderment, that I should have laughed aloud if the occasion had been less grave. He was absolutely nonplussed; and when Tom was in such a mental condition over any local matter it must have been mysterious indeed, for I think he knew every man, woman, and child within ten miles, and if he couldn't bring to book all the devilment that went on he knew all about it. Here, however, he was for once absolutely at sea. This was nothing whatever to do with the strenuous disavowals of Tim and Billy Fagan. They were outside suspicion themselves; they hadn't the ability, even if they had had the inclination, to kill partridges in this fashion. They were on the kindliest terms, too, with their landlord;

A CARTRIDGE-CASE FRESHLY FIRED

he could not think of any single person who would do this thing, and at the same time for whom they would thus perjure themselves. And that they had done so there was no room for doubt. If there had been Con soon put an end to it, for with that passion for misplaced mystery usual with the Irish peasant, he was seen beckoning us up to where he was standing. There were traces here of another shot bird, but there was also lying in the grass something still more conclusive, and that was a cartridge-case freshly fired.

'Con,' said Tom, 'what do you make of it?'

Con's face was so wrinkled up with perplexity it looked like a corrugated-iron roof.

'Ma-ake of it, yer honour! I'm bate; by the blessed saints I'm bate intoirely, and that's the truth.'

'Do you think Father Blake [Father O'Toole's successor] has had a hand in this?'

Con looked ineffable contempt. Such a suggestion seemed like joking on a serious subject. He didn't even condescend to answer.

'Well, we'll see,' said Tom, 'if they have left us a bird or two, anyhow.' But they hadn't. We hunted every foot of ground in the neighbourhood. The other thirteen birds, or nearly all of them, had been killed beyond doubt. Some master hand, too, had been here.

'Con,' says Tom, 'go round and inquire at the houses if they have heard any shooting this morning. Every shot here must have shaken their windows.'

Con was back in ten minutes. 'They all of 'em says, yer honour, there's not been a gun fired on the place this year at all, at all.'

We had a little sport on the homeward beat, but that is of no consequence. Tom was sick at heart. Everything had been going so smoothly, and here was a confounded mystery to which there seemed no clue. There were plenty of strangers who were ready at all times to drive over and poach an outlying place, but Tom knew to a certainty, from the attitude of the tenants, this was no stranger. We talked it over at night with our pipes, but that was of no use. Tom slept on it, but was no nearer a solution in the morning.

We were sitting at breakfast when the servant came in and said Con O'Sullivan had ridden down from the mountains and wished to see the masther. Tom went out at once, and I followed him. The keeper was at the back door with important tidings written on every line of his furrowed countenance. He had news of note, there was no doubt, and taking his master out into the very middle of the large yard, and looking all round the skyline and straight up in the air to make sure no one was listening, he proceeded with both hands over his mouth to impart it.

Nothing definite, however, seemed to have been conveyed to Tom. He was evidently still mystified, though aroused to some curiosity.

'Get your hat,' said he, 'and come along down to the Lodge at once. Those are Con's orders, though what the blazes he's after goodness knows.'

ON THE SIDE OF THE CAR NEAREST TO US SAT A ONCE TOO FAMILIAR FORM

We were soon at the Lodge gates, and Con was already standing out in the high road in an attitude of some expectancy. This road, it must be said, connected the upper country with the railway station, which was only a few hundred yards off.

'Whisht, yer honours, if ye'll just be aisy and shtand where ye are for tin minutes ye'll see a sight ye havn't set yer eyes on this foive years.'

And Con was literally right; for in less than half the time allowed there came the sound of a car mounting the hill, at whose summit Tom's front gate was situated.

When the trap came in sight it was within forty yards of us. 'Con,' says Tom, who knew every horse within ten miles, 'that's Billy Fagan's grey mare surely.'

'It is, yer honour.'

'And that's Billy himself driving.'

'It is, yer honour, and he's got a passenger on board.'

The car was now on level ground and dashing right up to us.

'And by——'

There was no need for Tom to finish the sentence as the trap swept past us; for there, as cool as a cucumber, on the side of the car nearest to us, sat a once too-familiar form. It was no phantom, this rosy-faced cheery cleric that beamed on us through his spectacles for two brief seconds and disappeared down the highway, but that it was that illustrious sportsman Father O'Toole there was not a shadow of room for doubt. Nor, indeed, was there much doubt that the thirteen missing birds and a gun-case were in the well of the car behind him.

Tom, whose sense of humour was most painfully developed, sat down on the kerbstone and laughed loudly and uninterruptedly for a good five minutes. Con O'Sullivan looked sadly and disapprovingly at his master, and taking off his hat began slowly polishing his billiard-ball head with the red bandana.

'Con,' says Tom, when he was able to speak.

'Sorr.'

'Have you heard anything?'

'Sure and I've heard quite enough, yer honour, for would ye think that Father O'Toole was in Billy Fagan's house (Billy you'll be mindin' is his first coosin) the whole time you gintlemen was saking the big covey yonder, and belikes he was winkin' his eye at us out o' the winder, and knowin' in the maintime that he had thim thirteen birds, or the most of 'em, snug in the tail of his coat, bad cess to him. Misther Tom, Father O'Toole's the divil, and may the saints in heaven again forgive me shpakin' so of the holy man.'

FROM AN UNDERGRADUATE'S NOTE-BOOK

BY H. B. M. COUTTS

THE palmy days of Oxford hunting seem, alas! to be over. One sometimes hears the elder generation speak regretfully of the days when a muster of ten or a dozen pink coats in front of the 'House' of a November morning was no uncommon spectacle. Now no one turns out in pink, and only a few men hunt regularly throughout the term. But for all that there are a good many undergraduates who are still keen about the sport, and take a day on a hireling whenever the exigencies of lectures in the morning and of the river or the football field in the afternoon allow.

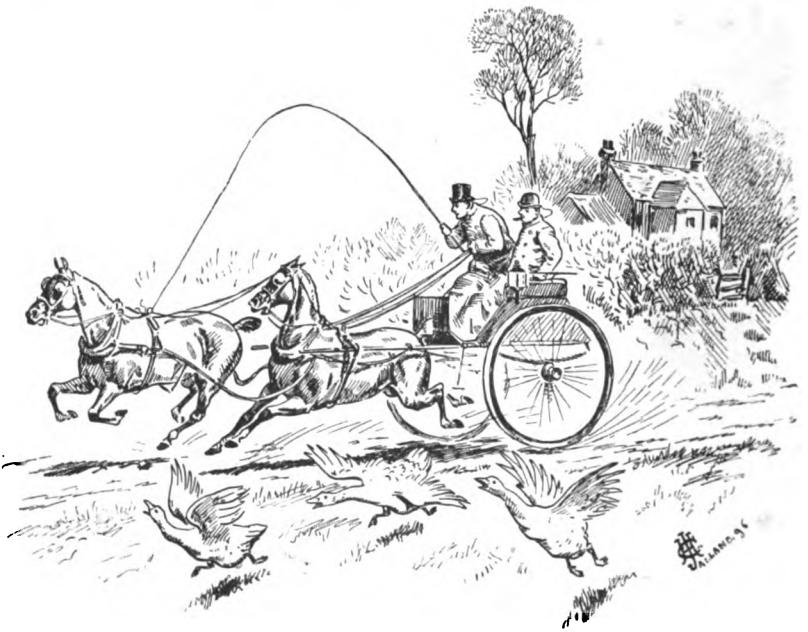
On the particular day which I intend to describe the Heythrop met about fourteen miles off, at Ledwell village. This was too good a meet to lose, so several of us determined to go if possible. But unfortunately it was almost the last day of term, and the undergraduates of Old College were to be tortured with the examinations popularly known as 'Colleckers.' The problem before us was this: the meet was fourteen miles away at 11.30; the examination was to begin at ten o'clock. How then was it possible to both 'satisfy the examiners' and to arrive in time at the meet? The only thing to be done was to don boots, breeches, &c., and conceal them under the widest possible outer garments, scribble as much as one could in half an hour, have the horses sent on by train, and drive to the meet in an hour or less! There was a great consultation about it the night before in the Doleful One's rooms. The Doleful One and his particular pal Peter opined that it could never be done—at least the Doleful One did, and of course Peter did the same. To slightly alter the words of the song, 'First he said he wouldn't; then he said he couldn't; then he said, Well, I'll see.' The awful fate of these two hesitators will be duly set forth later. The rest of us decided to go at all costs. The Fat Boy and G. B. were to go together in a dogcart

with a very fast trotting mare, while Roulers and I agreed to drive a tandem—a very fair pair of 13.2 ponies who could do their twelve miles an hour when put to it. Roulers had driven a tandem some three times before, and I had done so once, so we knew all about it.

Punctually as the clock struck ten we went into Hall, and to our great delight found that the Don who was to overlook our labours was a most excellent and worthy person, well known to most Oxford men for his benign appearance, his occasional eccentricities of speech, and his short sight. At about twenty minutes past ten the Fat Boy chose an opportune moment, deposited his papers on the nearest table meant for their reception, and made a graceful exit when the amiable Don above mentioned was at the other end of Hall. This manœuvre was executed by the other three of us with conspicuous success, at decent intervals. I went last, and after hurrying up to my rooms to remove my outer habiliments, made a bolt for the gate where our trap was waiting, hoping devoutly that no one had seen me who might afterwards ask awkward questions.

Roulers did not turn up for five minutes or so, having had the evil fortune to meet his tutor, who had very naturally asked him why he was going to hunt, when he should have been engaged in putting into words his theological knowledge? Roulers assured him that his paper was full, complete, and satisfactory, and so escaped—for the time! As fast as possible we rattled down to the end of St. Giles, where we found our leader in readiness; for the authorities, having, I suppose, some appreciation of the sacredness of human life, refuse to allow tandems to be driven through the streets of Oxford by undergraduates—an undoubtedly wise precaution. My companion took the reins and we bowled merrily along, the two ponies doing all they knew and going of themselves. It was a splendid morning, a little too bright perhaps, but the ground was in good condition, the wind gentle and in the right direction. After we had gone five or six miles I relieved the driver. For a time all went well, until we came to a cross road. Not being quite sure of the way, we stopped to ask a rustic who was breaking stones which was the right road to Ledwell. He showed us, and I tried to persuade my leader to go down it, with the result that he turned round and looked at me—reproachfully, I thought. A little persuasion with the whip, however, put him right, and we set off at a tremendous pace down a steep hill, the end of which was invisible round a sharp corner. Suddenly it dawned on me that my

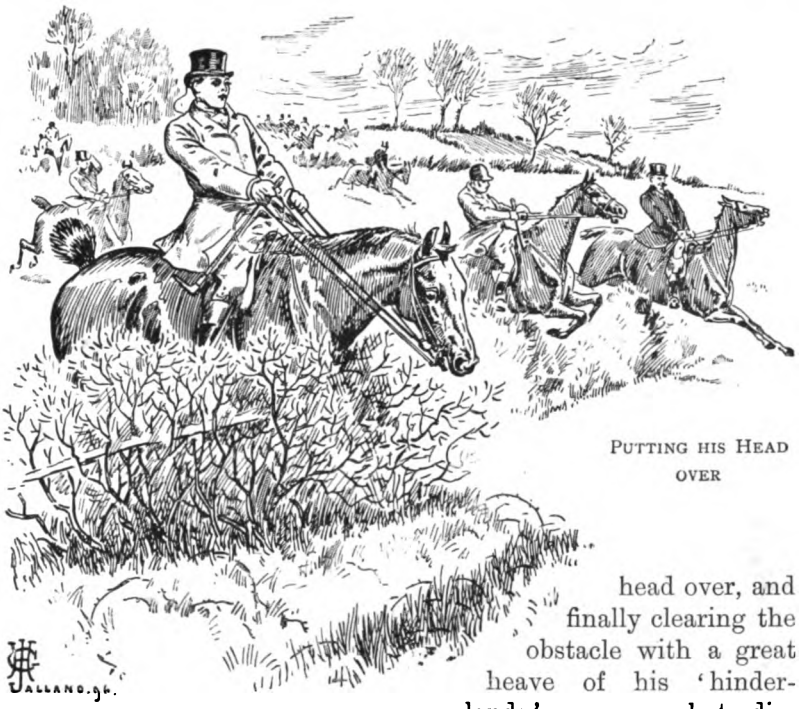
wheeler was in some mysterious way overhauling my leader, and at the same moment my whip caught fast somewhere in the harness. Roulers shouted to me to pull my wheeler, but he would not be pulled, and goodness knows what would have happened unless my whip had disentangled itself. I promptly let the leader have it, which restored him to his normal position in front of, instead of at the side of, his companion. We got down that hill safely somehow; but if my whip had stuck fast and something had been coming round the corner, I should scarcely have been left in a position to describe the incident. We soon after this reached Ledwell village, and found that the hounds had just that minute moved off. Our horses were there all right, as also were G. B. and the Fat Boy, who must have been a little in front of us all the way. We had done the fourteen miles in about an hour and twenty minutes—not bad going! We mounted with all speed, and jogged after the hounds. Our horses were the pick of one of the best livery stables in Oxford, which is not saying



My Whip caught fast

much perhaps, but they were none of them bad to go, though possibly not too good to look at. Moreover, they were all as hard as nails, for it was near the end of the season, and they had been doing their two days a week with some regularity ever since

November. G. B. was on a really nice horse, a six-year-old with a good mouth and a peculiar style of leaping. He always jumped as if he wanted to look at what was on the other side first, getting closer under a fence than any horse I have ever seen, then putting his



PUTTING HIS HEAD OVER

head over, and finally clearing the obstacle with a great heave of his 'hinderlands'—a somewhat disconcerting style before you got used to it.

Hounds were by this time in covert, so we jogged quickly down an exceedingly muddy lane and took up a position at a corner of the wood, in company with a goodly number of other sportsmen and sportswomen. We had not long to wait. First we heard a whimper, then another, and then in a minute every hound took up the cry. The fox did not wait long, but went away at best speed, about a field only in front of the hounds, who, with a glorious burst of sound, poured out of covert at a tremendous pace after him. The first two or three fields were all grass, with nice flying fences that everybody got over successfully, and then at the bottom of a fairly sharp decline we saw willows and the gleam of water.

Now if you are in a country you do not know, it is never wise to be over bold at a brook, or you may find yourself in for an absolutely impossible jump that is bound to end disastrously; so

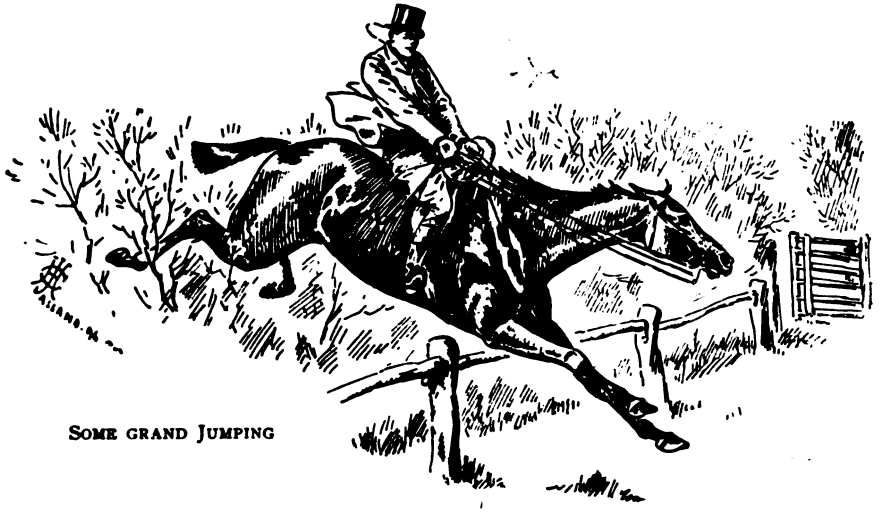
I took a pull at my horse, and waited to see where the first dozen horsemen or so took it. Two or three got over it all right; so putting my animal to his best pace we charged the water. Just as we got about twenty yards off the edge—splash, splash! and two riders, a gentleman and a lady, went in, one on each side of me. This was altogether too much for my horse's nerves,

SPLASH, SPLASH!

and he stopped dead, nearly shooting me over his head into the stream. No persuasion could get him over, so giving up in despair, I, in company with the large majority of the field, made for a bridge which lay about a hundred yards to the left. The fox was probably headed here, as hounds swung sharply round to the left, to the discomfiture of the more adventurous spirits (including G. B.) who had got over the brook.

They were still running very fast, and there were not many of the field on terms with them. We now got on to a road for about half a mile, when hounds again swung to the left, across a beautiful grass country with some good-sized fences, generally with a ditch on one side of them. After about ten minutes of this we arrived at a lot of plough, and hounds checked for a minute or two. They soon hit it off again, however, though the scent was not so good and the plough was very heavy. If our horses had not had a breather I am sure not a few would have come to a standstill altogether. Once off the plough, hounds ran quicker again, and not more than a dozen people now were anything like with them.

Still swinging to the left, and evidently running for blood, they disappeared into a shrubbery close to a church, after crossing a large park. Here they checked for about five minutes; the fox had evidently lain down. Roulers and I, considering the pace, were not far behind, and the check let us up again, though his mare was evidently not good for much more, and my animal by no



SOME GRAND JUMPING

means as fresh as when we started. G. B. and the Fat Boy were nowhere to be seen. We had not been waiting long when a 'Holloa!' at the end of the shrubbery told us that the fox was off again. Galloping on we got a view of him, and saw he was evidently dead beat. Hounds were close behind him, and ran into him in the open in about five minutes more, after as good a run as one could wish for. The only thing that spoilt it was that we had been running the whole time in a large ring, and killed within three hundred yards of the place where we met. Not knowing the country I had never noticed this, till it suddenly dawned on me, while the fox was being broken up, that I knew where we were.

G. B. turned up in about ten minutes in a very contented frame of mind, although he had never seen the hounds after getting over the brook. However, as he said himself, 'he had had some grand jumping'! The Fat Boy arrived later still, and what he had been doing is a mystery even now. He and his horse looked as fresh as at the start. We accused him of having waited at the meet until hounds came round to him again, but this he indignantly denied.

Of course we ought to have started for home now, as we were a good fourteen miles from Oxford and our horses were tired. Instead of this we went on, and had a couple of short gallops. Finally, at about three o'clock, we determined to stop, and made for the nearest village. G. B. was nowhere to be seen, so we proceeded without him. We stopped at the village public, how-

THE EFFECT OF THE EGGS AND BACON

ever, to put up our horses, and on entering the 'best parlour' discovered the redoubtable G. B. discussing an enormous dish of eggs and bacon. It was not long before we were doing the same, and very excellent they tasted.

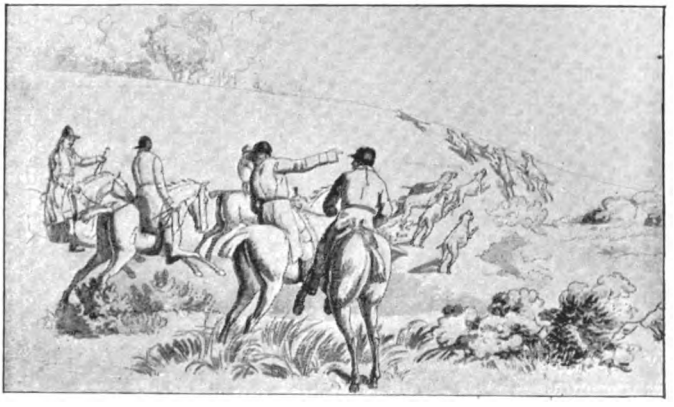
It was nearly dark when we set out for home, and to cheer up our tired animals we enlivened the way with what we knew of the latest music-hall choruses. I hope they appreciated our melodious efforts.

We reached Oxford and our stables at about eight o'clock, and after changing our clothes assembled in the Fat Boy's rooms for supper. Peter and the Doleful One came in just as we were beginning, with a prodigious story of how they had given up the idea of the Heythrop and gone with the South Oxfordshire! They said they had had a record run, and that one of them had been given the mask and the other the brush; in fact, they told

a most circumstantial tale of derring-do on their own part, and would not listen to any account of our run.

What had really happened had been this: they had started very late for Ledwell, had been riding about all day trying to find the hounds, and, to end up with, Peter's horse had come down head over heels at a little ditch by the side of the road! They had brought this awful fate on their own heads by their fear and doubt, and we did not feel much sorrow for them. Why tell of how later on in the evening Peter thought he was a fox, and how after a most successful run he was finally pulled down in the open just under the Dean's window?

So ended one of those days that will always be remembered as a red-letter day in one's existence, and to which it will never be anything but a pleasure to look back.



THE LADIES' CYCLE CLUB

BY JAMES F. SULLIVAN

'JAMES, dear,' said Mrs. Newmattick, 'Mrs. Wheeler has actually got a bicycle! Look—there she goes. How badly she rides! Fat people look so dreadful on bicycles, don't they? Yes, they *do*, James. There—didn't I tell you she would run into that milkman's truck? She *has!* She has no business to go out on a bicycle if she can't avoid running into milkmen's trucks!'

Then a week elapsed. . . .

'James, dear,' said Mrs. Newmattick, 'I declare if Mrs. Spindle hasn't bought a bicycle! Fancy! I saw her out this afternoon, running into the fat policeman at the corner—you know, the policeman with the red neck. She looks dreadfully bad on a bicycle—thin people always do, you know; so gawky and—you know—not enough petticoats—as if they wanted to be blown out, like a tyre. I'm sure the policeman did all he could to get out of the way, when he saw her coming a quarter of a mile down the road; and at last he got on the step of the Joneses' back-gate; but she got at him even there. I'm sure I wouldn't ride a bicycle if I couldn't avoid running into fat policemen—but there! People *are* so stupid!'

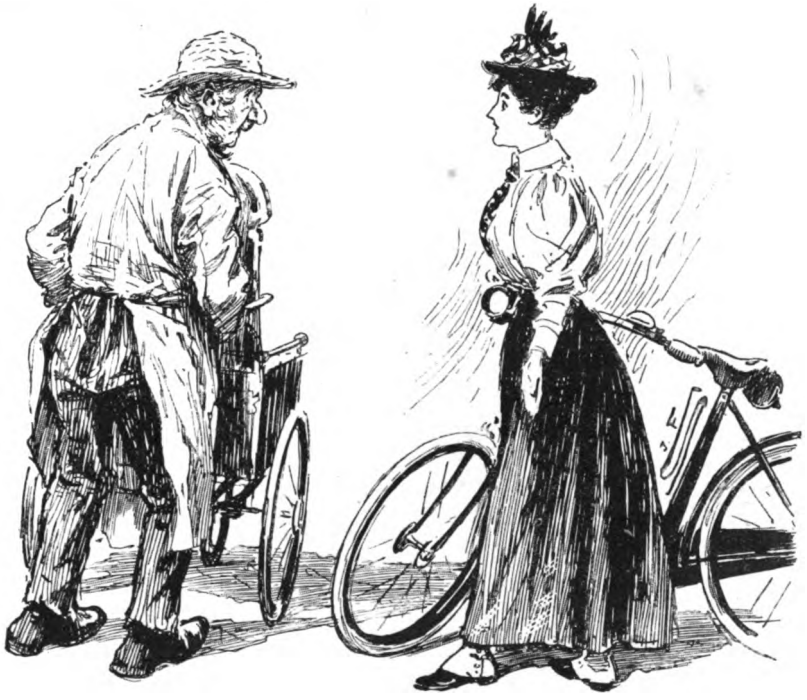
. . . . . .

'James, dear,' said Mrs. N., 'what *do* you think, now? You'll never guess. Whom do you think I saw on a bicycle to-day? Yes—Mrs. Andlebar; I knew you would guess directly. Of course *she* would be sure to take to a bicycle, just to show how bad she *could* look if she gave her mind to it. Just exactly like a rag-bag! What—"*pretty*?" *Do* be quiet, James, and don't show your ignorance! How can any woman be pretty with a piece of white tape hanging out of her placket-hole?'

. . . . . .

'James, dear,' said Mrs. N., '*can't* you stay away from the City to-morrow, and come over with me to the "Cycleries"? I'm going to have a lesson. Oh, you needn't be so surprised. I *will* learn to ride—I must, because I've bought a bicycle—such a beautiful machine! It's enamelled deep blue, turned up with gold, with lovely ivorine handles and such a dear little lamp with one red eye and one green eye!'

'But how do you know it's a beautiful machine?' asked Newmattick.



RUNNING INTO A MILKMAN'S TRUCK

'Know? Haven't I told you it's deep blue turned up with gold, and the dearest little lamp with one red eye——'

'*That's* all right,' said Mr. N.; 'but what make is it—what sort of bearings, and so on?'

'What are "bearings"? I don't know anything about bearings—I thought it was a Stock Exchange term. I don't know what "make" it is—of course it's the usual make—you know—with two wheels, one in front of the other; and a dress-guard, and handles to catch hold of. Haven't you ever seen a bicycle?'

'Yes, my dear; but how do you know it isn't a duffer?'

'Of course it can't be a "duffer," because it's second-hand. That's a guarantee; because the person who first bought it *wouldn't* have bought it if it hadn't been a good machine. Besides, the man *said* it was a beautiful machine—the man I bought it of. It was so cheap too—only twenty-three guineas. He said I'd better have new tyres, and a brake fitted to it, and a few other new parts; and it will be here next week. It will only cost me twenty-nine guineas *altogether*; and he says it's dirt cheap.'

'But, my love,' said Newmattick, 'a first-class *new* machine only costs from sixteen to twenty-five guineas all complete!'

'There! Why didn't you tell me that *before* I bought it?'

'Because you never told me you were going to buy a bicycle.'

'How *could* I tell you, when I didn't know it myself? How unreasonable men are! Well, you will have to see the man and get out of it the best way you can, as you didn't warn me until I had bought it!'

Newmattick did see the man. There was a stormy interview, and the blue-and-gold bicycle did not come home next week.

'And now,' said Mrs. N., 'as you think I can't be trusted to buy myself a machine—as if women were babies!—you had better buy me one yourself!'

He did; the new purchase had not the guarantee of being second-hand, nor did it cost twenty-nine guineas.

Mrs. Newmattick was delighted.

'It is a beauty!' she said; and all her spare time was thenceforward devoted to polishing the nickel-plating with a new washleather. Mrs. N. would hurry over 'giving the orders' of a morning to get up to her new machine and the washleather. It certainly was a dainty bicycle; with a subtle sense of appropriateness to feminine traditions the makers had designed the gear-case to lace up like corsets, and had attached the silk-net dress-guard with little black hooks—the little hooks naturally associated with 'eyes.'

The puzzle was where to keep it; the shed in the garden was not to be thought of; the little room at the end of the hall was suspected of damp; in the hall it might get kicked; the front rooms were unsuitable because the sun might warp the machine: finally it was kept in the best bedroom, with a little pillow (specially made) to prevent the wall from scratching the handlebar, and a soft mat for the tyres to rest on.

'But aren't you ever going to ride it?' asked N. The question affected Mrs. Newmattick like a shock: disquieting visions of mud,

scratches, punctures, and collisions with milkmen's trucks surged through her troubled mind.

But, after a severe mental struggle, she decided that she *must* ride it, because Mrs. Wheeler, and Mrs. Andlebar, and some of her other friends were bearding her in her very lair by daily riding past her windows; and she was not going to have them defying her like that with impunity.

A Stormy Interview

'Besides, James,' she said (with a sort of divine inspiration in her brown eye, which lifted her above the creatures of common clay), 'I feel I have a sort of mission. It's my duty—even at the sacrifice of my beautiful machine—to show them how nice a woman *can* look on a bicycle. It will be quite a revelation to them all! I will go out on it this very day!'

'But you haven't learned,' objected Newmattick.

'You could run along and hold me up, James.'

'But wouldn't that be a bit undignified as a start?' said James.

So Mrs. Newmattick crept over to the 'Cycleries' to take lessons on the quiet. It was a close secret—so close that she got up half an hour earlier, and went before breakfast; and was received at the 'Cycleries' by many ladies of her acquaintance, who were taking lessons on the sly at an hour when no one would be likely to see them.

The secret being out, they decided to form a Ladies' Cycling Club, and met at afternoon tea to draw up rules. There was a hitch over Rule I.—each lady firmly holding that Rule I. ought to constitute her captain of the club. So, amid strained feelings, they left out Rule I., and proceeded to Rule II., which someone proposed should run 'That each member should dress becomingly.'

This rule also gave rise to considerable friction consequent on difference of opinion as to becoming dress. Pink suited Mrs. Newmattick, blue Mrs. Andlebar, yellow Mrs. Wheeler, and so on. They dropped Rule II., and postponed the discussion of other rules because nobody had any idea what they were to be about.

Then there came the question of the rendezvous. Mrs. Newmattick and Mrs. Andlebar were social rivals; and, it being justly felt that the member at whose house the meets took place would gain a great advantage, a sharp and sarcastic controversy arose over the question; the point being eventually dropped, and no decision reached.

But in a few days it leaked out that Mrs. Andlebar was engaged in secretly plotting to the end that the meets should take place at her house. Mrs. Andlebar was the wife of a doctor —there were forty-two doctors in the suburb.

'Of course she thinks it will lead to business,' remarked Mrs. Newmattick. 'But it sha'n't, James!'

Then Mrs. N. began to counterplot; so that a certain number of the members were cajoled into meeting at Mrs. Andlebar's, and a certain number at Mrs. Newmattick's.

This led to remarks being made on both sides, and to a certain strained feeling between the two sections.

Each of the rival ladies now began to be possessed by a new and all-absorbing ambition—an actual passion which warped her very nature to the utter suppression of her better feelings; she now had one object in life—to see a longer line of bicycles along the kerb in front of her house than her rival could boast along

the kerb in front of *hers*. All sorts of manœuvres and cunning tricks were resorted to in order to lengthen the line: all the approachable nephews and nieces were bribed to bring their machines on meet-days, and stand them by the kerb, and so forth; and more nasty remarks were made.

Then the riding began. A squadron of thirteen ladies started; and when Mr. Newmattick returned from the City, his wife fell upon his breast and wept piteously.

'I've had a dreadful accident!' she said in a hollow voice as if happiness had for ever fled.

'What? Come a cropper? You don't *seem* hurt. What have you done, you little idiot? Why don't you tell me? . . . Only killed somebody else, perhaps?'

There was a tone of reassurance in the last sentence, which conveyed 'perhaps it's not so bad after all.'

'No, not that,' said Mrs. N. 'But my poor bicycle! A horrid clumsy man ran his into it!'

'And smashed it up?'

'N—n—o. It isn't quite smashed up, but—oh, do come and look; what *shall* I do? Can *anything* be done?'

There were some scratches on the nickel-plating of the handle-bar; the bell had a little scratch too.

'Why don't they punish great clumsy men who run into people?' she said.

'But are you sure you didn't run into *him*? Which side of the road was he?'

'Why, on *my* side! Of course I didn't run into him—he ran into me; at least, not exactly; because he had got down to oil his machine.'

'But which side of the road were *you* going?'

'Why the—yes, the right-hand side—down hill. I *couldn't* stop. He had his back to me. What right have people to turn their backs to things on a public road? I called out to him to get out of the way—that is, not *before* he ran into me, exactly; but I told him he ought to have got out of the way, afterwards. And then he was rude, too—at least, he said that I was riding on the wrong side of the road, and ran into *him*. Then I threatened to give him in charge.'

'Don't you think, Twinkles,' said Mr. Newmattick reflectively, 'that it might diminish the probabilities of accident if you kept to the rule of the road?'

'What's that?' asked Mrs. N.

'Well, suppose you kept on the left side of the road, for instance——'

'There now, that's just how a person talks who hasn't had any practical experience! It's very pretty in theory, no doubt; but why am I to keep on the left side when the cleaner bit happens to be on the right? We always pick out the clean side; and if vehicles *will* meet us, they must just go on the other side, of course. There was a horrid man driving a four-in-hand to-day; and he wouldn't get out of my way and go on the right until I set my teeth and got down and stood still right in front of the horses; and then he *had* to. *He* was rude, too—at least, he looked quite black, and muttered something to himself. People *are* horrid! And then if his front horses didn't try to turn round, and begin rearing, and frightened me dreadfully—I thought they would turn the coach over! A nice thing it would have been if it had fallen over on my machine!'

Some of the members of the club had idiosyncrasies which led to more or less inconvenience.

Mrs. Twitter was affected by a magnetic attraction towards brewers' drays; however wide the road was, she inevitably ran into them. All her struggles against this fascination were vain. The moment she sighted a dray in the extreme distance, she felt that the hand of Fate was propelling her towards catastrophe; and steer as she would, the inevitable collision took place. At half a mile distance she would begin to ring her bell feverishly, as a signal for the brewer's man to go away, drive up a side street, or turn round and go back; but the man—probably unaware of the meaning of the signal—never seemed to take warning. Then Mrs. Twitter would go very slowly indeed, ringing incessantly all the while; and finally fall off against the horses, or on to the wheel.

How she escaped annihilation none ever knew, but her friends never expected her to survive a ride.

Mrs. Hazie always confounded her bell with her brake; with the intention of ringing her bell when coming to a corner, she would put her brake hard down instead, with various results. The first time she was thrown on to a barrow, which luckily was laden with a soft sack. The second time she wrenched off her front tyre, buckled the wheel, bent a pedal, smashed the lamp, cut her hands, tore her blouse, pulled all the buttons off her gaiter, and had to walk home covered with mud. The third time she was run into behind by the whole club, and many nasty remarks were made. The fourth time she flew into the arms of a very dirty tramp, and had to be ransomed.

Miss Cheekington would ride on the path, to the despair of

all the policemen in the suburb; and if she had not been the daughter of a magistrate, goodness knows how many years' penal servitude she would have accumulated by now!

Mrs. Wheeler *would* bring her dog. Next to a hen, that dog was the most foolish animal that ever went on a road. His

itinerary consisted of zigzags in front of the bicycles: this was in calm times; but when he was frightened by something (and, being a pug, he was *always* frightened by something—a dog, a cat, a boy, a piece of newspaper, a pig, a duck– anything) he always ran full tilt into the wheel of the nearest machine, as a rule upsetting its rider.

Then, after about two miles Mrs. Wheeler's pug always got tired, and lay down in the road; when it became necessary for the whole caravan to stop and coax him to go on—and he declined; and Mrs. Wheeler would attempt to carry him on her bicycle, and fail—mostly in consequence of his struggles to jump down—and fall off, and drop the pug, who would howl loudly; and then there were words between Mrs. Wheeler and the other members, and a general quarrel all round.

But one day they had a real accident, which brought great glory to the Club.

Mrs. Wheeler, riding along a lane, was suddenly bowled over by a bolting horse with the bit in his teeth; and the horse was followed by a victoria; and the wheels of the victoria went right over Mrs. Wheeler's back. At this all the other ladies fell off their machines, and most of them screamed. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that Mrs. Wheeler was killed, and quite ready for burial; Mrs. W. herself was more convinced of it than anyone else: and when she had been taken home in a brougham and put in bed, and the doctor had seen her and pronounced that there was no injury beyond external bruises, she felt aggrieved.

The fact that the accident had not resulted more seriously was explained by several other facts: the victoria was empty, and had pneumatic tyres; and Mrs. Wheeler was, as it were, pneumatic, being very plump; and the road was very soft and muddy.

Very soon an epidemic of deceit and craftiness broke out in that suburb; for the members of the club met and decided that if their husbands and brothers came to know of the accident they would forbid them to ride any more, and that the most strenuous efforts must be made to keep them in ignorance.

But Mrs. Wheeler's husband foiled all this by telling about the affair the very next morning, on the way to the City.

Then followed a period of deep doubt, gloom, and uncertainty. Those ladies whose men folk did *not* forbid them to ride any more did not really appear very eager to ride when the time came for getting the machine out.

They would assume their cycling dress and go and gaze meditatively at the machine; and give it a polish; and look out of window at the road; and decide that it would be a pity to get the bicycle muddy; and go out for a walk and call on each other for confidence and support; and fail to obtain it.

Next came the season for going out of town.

'How is Mercury to travel?' asked Mrs. Newmattick anxiously. (Mercury was the pet bicycle.)

'Is it to travel?' said Mr. N. 'It won't be of very much use on a steamer, will it? You know we're engaged to go with the Joneses to Norway.'

'Oh, dear!' said Mrs. N., 'I couldn't leave him at home!' ('Him' was Mercury.)

'It wouldn't be likely to commit suicide or murder the cat, would it?' said Mr. N.

'No; but I know what *would* happen—the servants would ride him and break him!'

'Well, I don't fancy cook would be likely to ride it, considering she weighs fifteen stone and can hardly waddle up stairs; and Jane will be away at her mother's.'

'But the boy——'

'Chain the boy up in the coal-cellar,' said Mr. N. 'And—while you're about it—couldn't you lock Mercury up in a room?'

'Oh, James, he would get rusty; and, besides, burglars would learn that we were away, and would break in and ride him. I *couldn't* leave him! Can't we write to the Joneses to say we are both very ill, and go on a bicycle tour?'

But that was not feasible; so Mercury had to go with them. His special toilet for the journey was the result of infinite care and forethought. First, his nickel-plated and enamelled parts were swathed in strips of old dress material; then it occurred to his proprietress that there might be stray pins in the trains and steamboats, and the tyres were carefully padded with wadding; then several labels were tied to him—one ran 'With great care,' another 'Do not catch hold here,' a third 'Not to be wetted.'

Then there came visions of the mud-guards being vulnerable, and pieces of wood had to be tied on cunningly to protect them.

Finally Mercury was carefully placed on the top of the cab, with two cushions out of the drawing-room for him to rest on.

Mrs. N. attempted to get Mercury into the railway carriage; but the four persons already there thought he would be in the way, and objected; and his owner glared at them, and murmured audibly, 'How horrid people are!'

However, by dint of making James get out at every halt and visit Mercury in the van; and of bribes to guards, railway porters, hotel porters, steamboat hands, and cabmen; and of getting a crate made for the machine at the port of embarkation; and of many other devices, Mercury returned from his cruise with only a few contusions. He had not travelled an inch by means of his own wheels.

When Mrs. Newmattick and Mercury came back from their

trip they found a vendetta, or blood-feud, raging between the Club and the children of a neighbouring rookery. One day the potentialities of the Club as a means of recreation and possible

profit had dawned upon these pleasant children; and they had sallied forth to meet the prey.

Arriving at the row of cycles in front of Mrs. Andlebar's house, they had offered to mind them while the ladies were with-

in; and, their kind offer being refused, two of the tyres were discovered to have been cut when the ladies came forth to mount.

The pleasant children had meanwhile proceeded to a quiet road which the Club generally took on starting, had carefully salted a patch of the road with tacks and fragments of broken glass, and then retired into ambush to await the result. The consequence had been that, a few yards further on, two of the riders had discovered their tyres flat, and had had to put back home for repairs.

When this same thing occurred for the second time, in the following week, Miss Pounder had 'spotted' one of the genial children hiding in a hedge, and had promptly got down and boxed his ears effectively, sending him off howling.

Mrs. Newmattick, returning home from her trip on the following day, suddenly became aware of bad language over the way, and of a very dirty Irishwoman with red arms hurling profane denunciations at Miss Pounder. It was the mother of the gentle child who had had his ears boxed; and when that mother had deafened the road with billingsgate for three-quarters of an hour, Miss Pounder sent for a policeman and got him to remove her.

On this, the denouncing mother went straight to the police-court and took out a summons against Miss P. for ill-using her child; Miss Pounder had to appear before a magistrate of unsound mind to answer the charge; and the magistrate, gazing at her with as much severity as the filmy eye of semi-idiocy is capable of, severely reproved her for ill-using innocent and harmless children, and discharged her with the warning that, if she came before him again, he should adopt severe measures. He then presented the outraged child with a shilling from the poor-box; and the proceedings terminated.

After that the Club did not dare to defend itself; it knew that it would be worse than useless to give any of the children in charge, as they would only be punished with a shilling from the poor-box.

When Mrs. Andlebar's wheel was buckled and herself thrown off, with the result of a broken arm, by one of the lovable children, her husband certainly did attempt to prosecute; but the magistrate of unsound mind read him such a scathing lecture on the baseness and enormity of attempting to take revenge on innocent children and trying to blight and poison their promising lives by subjecting them to the contaminating influence of a reformatory, that Andlebar crept away and hid himself.

Then *that* boy's mother came forth and besieged Dr. Andlebar's surgery (where she had attended some few scores of times to receive gratuitous advice, medicine, and port wine), and hurled several medicine bottles through the windows, telling him that

he could keep his filthy stuff, and needn't expect any more of *'er* custom.

So, when the children from the slum had succeeded in injuring one or two more of the members, and caught Mrs. Wheeler's

pug and kicked it to death, it was felt that the enemy carried too many guns, and that the Club must haul down its colours; the bicycles were sold for the best price obtainable—which averaged six pounds apiece for machines which had cost from fifteen to thirty pounds; and the Club resolved itself into a tea and indignation society. And one day, as the magistrate of unsound mind was driving to the court in a cab, one of the amiable children succeeded in startling the horse by throwing a lighted cracker at it; so that the horse bolted, and the magistrate was thrown out on his head. The result was that he had to be sent, carefully packed, to an asylum for idiots; where he spent the remainder of his life, just precisely as useful a member of society as he had always been when presiding in his court.

Probably, after all, the bicycles will not be wasted; as the School Board is deliberating on the levying of an extra rate to provide machines for the school children. So in all probability those amiable children of the slum will shortly be riding the machines discarded by the Ladies' Club; and this shows how things always balance themselves, and come right in the end.

A PHEASANT FARM

BY MAJOR CHARLES J. BOYLE

ALL my life I have taken an interest in pheasants, but I never thought that I should one day be the possessor of a 'pheasant farm.' One never knows what may happen, however—to this complexion have I come, and as I never saw any account of the work on such an establishment, perhaps my experience may be of interest to readers.

In 1885 I left the army and settled down to a country life. A friend gave me some silver pheasants, which I let run about on the lawn until I found that the sheepdogs chased them. I also bought a few golden pheasants, together with some common pheasants, and in 1888 the idea occurred to me of selling their eggs. I found I could easily dispose of all my supply and a great many more if I only had them. I received telegrams from friends asking if I could furnish them with eggs by the hundred, and this made me think, Why not start on a large scale? I consulted my coachman, who really originated the business. He is my manager now. We inspected together some of the largest pheasant farms in England, and, after talking the matter over, he said, 'Well, sir, if you will find the money I will do the work.' And right well he has done it.

The simplest way of explaining my method of conducting a very interesting and profitable undertaking will perhaps be to run through the year, and give an account of what we do each month.

January and February.—In the beginning of January I endeavour to send out the price lists of eggs for the coming season to all my old customers. (This year the postman said he had never seen so many letters sent from one house.) Apart from letter-writing, the work in these two months is not very severe. The laying pens have to be seen to. Grit, that is sweepings from the roadside, has to be collected and placed in each of the pens—the more the better, as the birds not only eat it but use it as dust baths. A certain amount of chalk must also

be put into each pen, and some pounded oyster shells; all the fences have to be thoroughly overhauled, to see that there is no possible loophole; for a pheasant, particularly during the laying season, will always try to get out. Another very important item is the water jars: these I place all round the large pens, with one to each of the small pens.

March.—The laying pens being now in perfect order, we proceed to catch up the birds from their winter pens and transfer them to the laying pens; this generally takes several days' hard work. The winter pens, or 'hill pens' as we usually call them, are situated about three hundred yards from the laying or home pens.

The system of securing the pheasants is as follows. Two or three days before catching, the birds are all driven into one large pen of about two acres; on the day of catching, the manager and myself walk round the pen and drive a few birds into a small adjoining pen, which measures about three yards by two, where they are shut in and covered over with sacking, the place being made quite dark. A boy then goes inside this place, catches the birds one by one, and hands them to the manager, who examines the bird, and if it is found all right pops it into a bag, five hens in one bag, four cocks in another; when these are caught they are carried to the home pens and turned in, and so on until all are caught.

The birds being all comfortably settled in their laying pens, there is not much more to do, except the feeding and watering, both very important items. Up to this date the birds have only been fed twice a day, but now they are fed three times a day. All the water jars have to be emptied and cleaned once a day, and in hot weather they are refilled every evening. The amount of water pheasants will drink is quite extraordinary.

During this month the winter pens are dressed with gas-lime and salt, and the dusting places, &c., are dug up.

We now begin to look for eggs: the earliest date on which I have found an egg was March 23. I heard last year of some pheasants being hatched on April 28, so that the mother (a wild hen) must have begun to lay considerably before March 23.

April and May.—These are the two busiest months in the whole year. My pens cover many acres of ground, and once a day every inch of this has to be searched for eggs, for if an egg is overlooked the rooks are sure to have it the next morning. Rooks are our greatest enemies during the egging season, and, although I keep a boy employed all day with a gun to frighten

there. I am sure they take away and eat a great number of eggs. One year I was troubled by the pheasants eating their own eggs, and I bought several glass eggs as a plan for preventing this; some of these eggs were afterwards found fully a quarter of a mile away from the pens, evidently having been carried off by the rooks. I am glad to say I have not been much troubled by egg-eaters. I am often asked if I know of a cure, but I believe there is none except an ounce of lead.

To afford some idea of the work during these months, I give an example of a day's work.

6.45 A.M. to 7.30 A.M.—Feeding.
9 A.M. to 10 A.M.—Watering, feeding dogs, &c.
10 A.M. to 12 noon.—Packing eggs.
12.30 to 1 P.M.—Feeding.
2 P.M. to 3 P.M.—Picking up eggs.
4 P.M. to 5 P.M.—Feeding.
6 P.M. to 8 P.M.—Picking up eggs.
8 P.M. to 9 P.M.—Sorting eggs and placing them in their trays.

Besides all this letters have to be written, books to be kept, eggs taken to the station, &c.

I have only put down an hour for sorting eggs, but it sometimes takes very much longer, as all badly shaped, badly coloured and small eggs have to be picked out. This sorting of eggs in my opinion is not very necessary, as I have set all sorts of eggs, and they all hatch except the very large ones; these I have not been able to hatch. I have known people afraid to sit 'frosted eggs,' but I expect if they had tried them they would have hatched out all right.

During the latter part of May we begin to 'sit' our eggs. This is the principal work of the whole year, as without a good stock of young birds it would be impossible to keep the business going. To change the blood I buy about half the eggs required. It takes from two to three days collecting the hens and getting the sitting boxes, &c. ready.

After some years' trial we have at last, I think, devised the proper sort of sitting boxes. I may here say that all our coops, &c. are made on the premises. The sitting boxes are formed to contain seven hens each; they are light and allow the hens plenty of air. The hens are first put into the boxes on any small eggs we have, and the next morning are taken off and put on to strings attached to [illegible] a pan of water is given to every three hens. We then go round to their work; that is, we go round and take up each [illegible] on know their business, and in

EGG STEALERS

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EGG STEALERS

two or three days are ready for the real eggs. There is a great art in taking a hen off and putting her back on the nest without breaking any eggs. Over each nest I place a card, which shows the date on which the eggs are set, and what becomes of every egg, so that I am able to tell exactly how the eggs hatch off. Last year we were two eggs out; this I can only account for by the hens having eaten them, as they will sometimes, if one happens to get broken in the nest.

During the latter part of this month we have to be more particular about picking up the pheasants' eggs, as the birds begin to get broody. A pheasant is a very tenacious sitter, but is not as a rule a good mother. I have often filled up a nest with stones, but this will not frighten the birds; in fact, they go on sitting on the stones. One hen who stole her nest allowed me to take her off every day; she used to peck at me, so that at last I had to put on a glove.

June.—Although we still go on gathering eggs as usual, we now consider that the harvest is almost over, as very few customers buy eggs so late. This year I have only sold a few thousand June eggs, although after June 7 the price is 1*l.* a hundred. Pheasant eggs are uncommonly good eating; in fact, they are nearly as nice as plovers', and I wonder more people do not buy them for eating.

The birds that are to be kept for another season have to be caught and taken to the hill pens; those that are to be slaughtered (these are the cocks and two-year-old hens) on October 1 are all put into one of the large home pens.

About the middle of the month the eggs begin to hatch, but before this takes place a great deal has to be done; the coops have all to be looked over, whitewashed, &c., and taken on to the rearing field. (Each coop, door and middle bar are numbered.) Then, the day before the eggs are expected to hatch, the hut, a really grand house, has to be moved to the rearing field.

All is now ready for the chicks. The morning they are hatched great care has to be taken. When we take off the hens, if we see one is hatching—that is, that there is a chick out and yet some more eggs to hatch—we leave her alone, and only take off the hens that have no chicks; then in about two or three hours' time we come again and look at the hens, and the strong chicks are taken out and put into a basket covered all round with flannel; any weakly chicks or eggs that are chipped are put under other hens that are just hatching. The chicks are taken to the field with their foster mother and put into coops, fifteen chicks to each coop. Great

care must be taken that the old hen broods her chicks well; if she does not, we discard her at once.

July is entirely taken up with the rearing of the young birds, but as so many excellent books have been written on this subject, I will not tell you how I do it, though I think our plan is as good as, if not better than, any other. When the chicks are three weeks old, they are pinioned in a particular way.

August.—If not done in the previous month, the laying pens have all to be overhauled, grass cut, salted and limed, &c. The young birds are now getting pretty strong, and it is difficult to shut them up in the evening; therefore a watch has to be kept all night for fear of foxes. In 1893 I had a great loss. I thought I would get an extra man to watch. Unluckily, one night he went to sleep on his post; that night a fox came, and the next morning we picked up over eighty birds, all of them half buried, and some quite three hundred yards from the coops. Since then I have never taken on an outsider as watchman.

When the birds are about two months old they are placed in the large pens on the top of the hill—about four acres.

September.—By this time all is fairly settled for the winter, and there is not very much to be done.

October.—At the beginning of this month all the one-year-old cocks and the two-year-old hens are in the London market, and some years fetch a very good price.

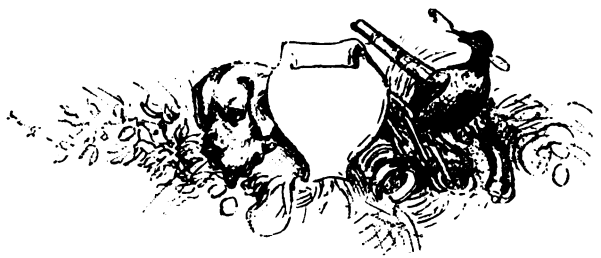
During this month, as also in November and December, work is rather slack, but still there is always something to be done. Last year we put up forty-four small pens and four large ones: this year I hope to put up some more small pens; the large home pens average about an acre each.

I have now given a fair account of a year's work on this farm. It is a most interesting occupation, and I am sure that pheasant farms do a great deal in keeping down poachers. It is a pity that partridges cannot be kept in the same way. I have tried keeping a few partridges with my pheasants, but it does not answer; they lay fairly well, and the eggs hatch out satisfactorily, but they do not begin to lay till so late. Pheasants never become really tame, but partridges will very soon come and almost eat out of your hand. I get many amusing letters asking for information about the rearing and feeding of pheasants.

One year I advertised several pinioned cocks for sale, and received an order for fifty; however, the day before they were to be sent, I received a telegram from the keeper saying that he did not require the birds, as his master was too ill to shoot.

The eggs of a pheasant vary in colour, shape, and size. The largest we have ever picked up was 2¼ in. long, 5¼ in. in circumference, and weighed 2 oz. The smallest egg was about the size of a sparrow's. We pride ourselves very much on the manner in which we pack our eggs; of the many thousands that we have sent off I have only heard of one being broken, and a few arriving cracked. One day some friends of mine were at a station and saw a basket of my eggs roll from the top of a truck full of luggage on to the rails, a distance of about eight feet. I at once wrote to the man to whom the eggs were going, and he told me the eggs arrived in perfect condition, not one broken, and I heard later that they hatched off extremely well.

In conclusion, I may say I always advise gentlemen requiring eggs to put up pens for themselves, but add that if they have to buy they should be sure that they buy from real pheasantries. By this I mean beware of false advertisements, and avoid buying cheap eggs, as these are generally poached.



DUCK SHOOTING IN UTAH

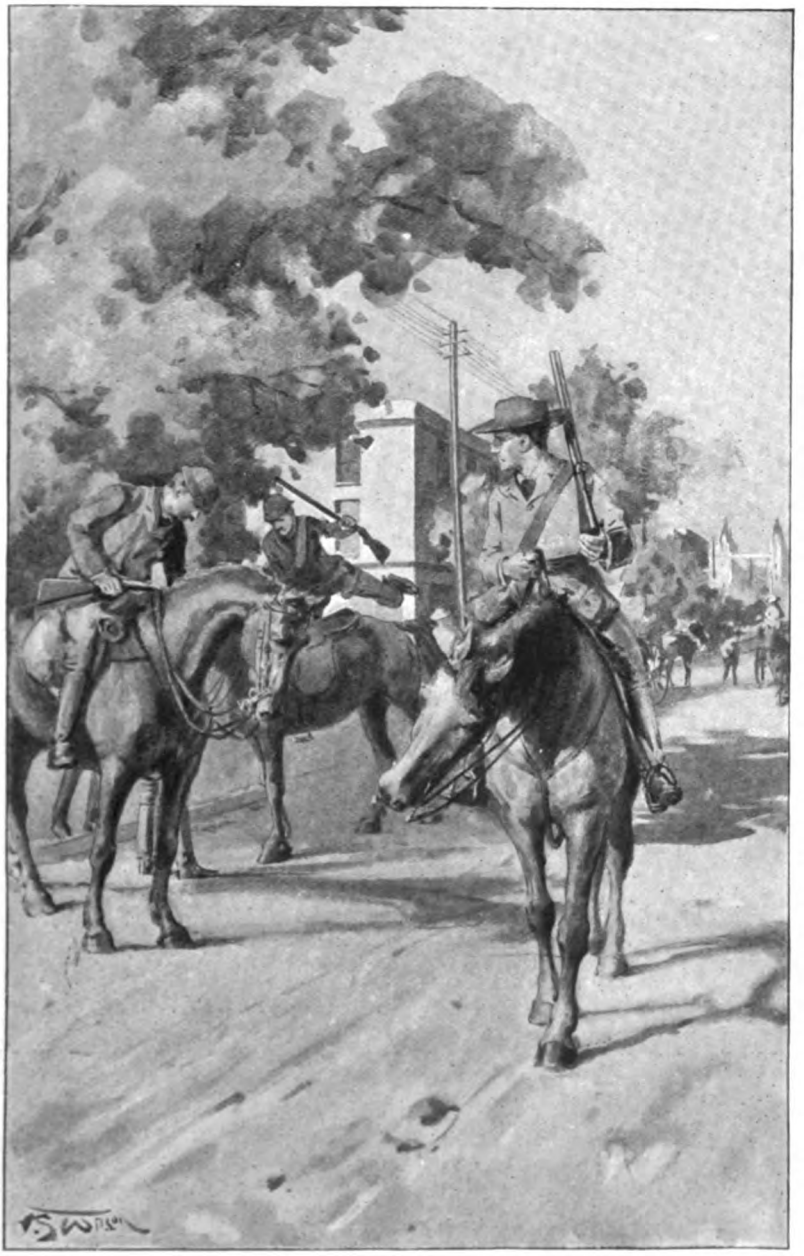
BY BASIL TOZER

It was by mere chance that I arrived in Salt Lake City on September 30 of last year, and by a still greater chance that, sitting in the smoking-room of the comfortable Knutsford Hotel, I discovered from a loquacious American that the Utah duck-shooting season opened on the following day.

'And I guess you might join us anyhow, as you seem so keen too,' he said, when we had talked for a considerable time. As he spoke he shifted the chewing gum into his other cheek with his tongue, and began to pinch a green cigar. 'We shall have quite a hunt, you bet; and when we're through you won't regret you came,' he continued presently.

The invitation was too good to refuse. Though not a diamond of the finest polish, my newly-made acquaintance appeared what he subsequently proved to be, a very good fellow, and in the cool of the evening we set out on our twenty-mile ride to the 'hunting ground'—A., his companion, B., and myself.

How tiresome that ride would have seemed but for my companions' interesting conversation! Irish miles are long enough, but Utah miles are much longer, unless some mistake had been made as to the distance. But A. kept asking questions concerning 'your great nation,' as he called Great Britain, while B. interrupted him at intervals in order to point out more than ordinary lofty peaks amid the mountain ranges that hem in the lovely valley, or to record incidents either amusing or weird concerning the dreaded Danite Band or Avenging Angels, who about the



WE SET OUT ON OUR TWENTY-MILE RIDE

middle of the century committed such atrocious acts of cruelty, ostensibly in defence of Brigham Young and his vaunted creed.

Shortly before sunset we branched away from the main track into a narrow trail, at first clearly perceptible, but difficult to follow by moonlight, the more so because the further we advanced the fainter it became. About two hours after dark, however, we reached our destination in safety, and found two other guns awaiting us near the small clump of trees and brushwood fixed upon as the meeting-place.

A night more perfect it would be difficult to conceive. The temperature was warm, almost hot. Not a sound broke the absolute stillness, not a breath of wind stirred a leaf, while from the summit of a distant mountain range the moon shone down through the clear atmosphere so brightly that several ranges almost opposite, but very many miles from where we now lay rolled up in our blankets, stood distinctly outlined.

. . . . . .

Salt Lake lies about fifteen miles from the city, and when some two hours before dawn I was suddenly awakened by the profuse caresses of a needlessly affectionate sporting dog—the offspring apparently of an American retriever and an Irish water spaniel—I gradually revived sufficiently to calculate that the Lake now lay three or four miles to our right.

Having cooked and consumed a rough breakfast, fed and watered our horses, inspected their tethering and loaded ourselves with as many cartridges as we could carry, we set out on foot along the rough track indicated by A. and B., who acted as leaders, and apparently had no difficulty in picking out the way. Furthermore, they seemed anxious to push on lest other gunners should forestall us.

'You see,' B. said to me when we had travelled about a mile, 'plenty of hunters will be out to-day, and it's always understood that the hunters who arrive first have the right to the ground. Plenty of duck? I just guess so. I've seen them flying over so considerable you couldn't hear yourself think for the noise of their wings. Wait, and you will see. I guess that with luck we shall strike more wild fowl to-day than in England you would think about in ten years, if what I hear of your country is correct, and the—— Hush!' he exclaimed, crouching suddenly, and pulling me down with him, 'you heard that?'

'I heard nothing,' I whispered; but almost as I spoke a distant sound of wings swishing through the air fell upon our ears. It grew louder and louder as we lay back motionless, and a few

moments afterwards a dark line of indistinguishable moving bodies passed high over our heads. The line soon became indistinct, and the swishing sound faded and died.

'That lot has been disturbed,' B. muttered, 'otherwise they would not have flown so. They are making the creek by yonder point; you can see it if you look hard. We must get on quickly,' he added, glancing at his watch, and some five minutes later we overtook our companions.

'There were three or four hundred there,' A. said, as he refilled his pipe; 'they came over us, too. Our point lies about a mile ahead. You and B. must bear to the right. We shall be about a mile from you when you are both posted. You and B. should remain in sight of each other, I think, if you are going to the place I mean. You take these two dogs; the other three come with us.'

'HUSH!' HE EXCLAIMED, CROUCHING SUDDENLY

We had been waiting in ambush barely fifteen minutes or so, and the first streaks of dawn were as yet scarcely visible, when I suddenly heard, away to the left, loud quackings of alarm, as though eight or twelve duck were rising hurriedly from the water. Taking the clearness and stillness of the atmosphere into consideration, I judged these duck to be rising about half a mile beyond B., whose head and shoulders were now dimly visible above the clump of reeds in which he stood ensconced. About thirty seconds later the soul-stirring 'swish, swish' again sounded in the air, though in which direction the duck were flying it was hard to decide. I glanced at my bob-tailed mongrel. He of course knew well enough, and his eyes were now riveted upon B.'s outline. Almost as I looked up I saw B.'s gun suddenly spring to his shoulder. A flash, quickly followed by another, and succeeded by two sharp reports that rang out on

the still morning air, and echoed again and again far up in the mountains, proclaimed that the day's work had begun. Almost immediately afterwards the sound of two more shots, fully two miles away, came re-echoing along the valley. Then followed several double shots and a couple of single shots, fired, I rightly supposed, by A. and his companions, and again the mountains

FULLY THIRTY DUCK CAME FLASHING OVER HIS HEAD

were filled with echoes. Indeed the echo in the Salt Lake Valley when the air is calm is remarkable. And now it was daylight, for twilight in the Western States lasts for a few minutes only. From my place of concealment duck and wild fowl of many sorts could be seen in several directions skimming over the small patches of water dotted about among the broad expanse of

reeds, or rising or descending at many different angles, but even Mr. Abel Chapman would have found difficulty in classifying these fowl as they flew, so great was their variety. On the preceding evening, and again in the morning, my companions had been talking about duck found in Western America, and contrasting them with the varieties that frequent Europe only, but they used so many colloquial terms that I was only with difficulty able to identify the particular sorts to which they referred. They spoke about 'dragon ducks,' and 'dart apples,' and 'butter balls,' and so forth, as we talk of mallard, and teal, and widgeon, but my friends' terms would convey naught to the mind of the ordinary Englishman. I was thinking of this when B. suddenly fired a quick double shot, and I saw a couple of small duck come fluttering down into the reeds. Hardly had he crouched and reloaded when fully thirty duck of the same sort came flashing over his head, wheeling as they saw him, and rising rapidly. But their tactics came too late. Quick as thought the smart right and left rang out again, and another brace of duck went thumping into the reeds, the latter pair killed in far more masterly style than the previous two. His eye was getting 'set' now, and the rapidity with which he loaded his hammer-gun was surprising. A very smart, trained loader would not reload a self-ejecting hammerless gun more rapidly. The duck were now coming across and over from almost every direction, and hardly five minutes passed without one or other of us putting in a double shot, while from afar the echo of sharp reports continued travelling up the valley. B.'s 'form' was really astounding. A. had said that he guessed B. was 'quite a marksman,' but very few men here in England, looked upon as marksmen, could perform as brilliantly. The way in which he timed his shots was the point that struck me chiefly, but his coolness and his complete self-control were also noticeable. Never until about to fire did he raise his gun. As the butt touched his shoulder the barrels were swung forward or backward as the case might be, the triggers were pulled, and the birds fell; but so quickly, yet calmly, was it all done that hardly an instant seemed to elapse. Indeed, the sight of such brilliant shooting proved so attractive that one felt almost tempted to stand still and merely watch the performer. The sun had now risen for over an hour, and still the duck came wheeling over, absurdly regardless of the danger which they ran. Many were of course still immature, and *bona-fide* flappers we spared. The sound of the reports seemed not to disturb them, and even when they saw the guns they were not greatly alarmed. There were

WE DISCUSSED ALMOST EVERY SORT OF SPORT IMAGINABLE

but two things that one could not help longing for—namely, a pair of guns and a loader; but naturally in America such innovations have not yet been admitted—at least not so far as I have seen. These rough and ready sportsmen feigned contempt for our 'British hunters,' though they secretly like the idea of a big shoot as conducted in England. How big a bag we should each have made with the help of a loader and a second gun it would be hard to say, for many a time four shots could have been obtained in a quick succession. As it was, B. frequently placed a right and left into the leaders of a string of duck, then loaded again and killed a pair of the tail birds before they could get out of shot. Naturally we were often forced to wait until our barrels became cool, and many shots were thus lost. The barrels of B.'s gun were made of American steel, which certainly seemed to grow hot quicker than my barrels formed from English Damascus iron. I remember Miss Annie Oakley, the famous American girl-shot, telling me a year or two ago that our English guns were better balanced than American guns, and oddly enough two of these shooters volunteered similar information. They could pick out a well-built English gun in the dark, solely by handling it, they said. The other two shooters had never used English guns, but they had heard 'noted hunters' corroborate Miss Oakley's and their companions' statements.

As the sun became hotter the duck gradually vanished. Truly their flight-time had lasted long enough, and never within three hours had I seen so many duck or so great a variety of wild fowl. B. was now wiping out his barrels and counting his empty shells, and he signalled to me to approach.

'Guess we've started well, anyway,' he said, with a suppressed chuckle of satisfaction. 'How about your duck hunting on the other side? Guess this knocks spots out of it, don't it? My! it's hot!' he continued, passing the oily gun rag across his forehead. 'Try a peg?'

So speaking he produced a flask of rye whisky, about the last sort of spirit suitable in such weather, but gratefully consumed for want of something better.

'Useless going on now,' B. resumed presently, as he rescrewed the top of his flask; 'best join our mates and all get rested up until later. Plenty more shooting then.'

During the time spent between the two beats, if one may so call them, in the only shady spot near at hand, we discussed almost every sort of sport imaginable. My friends being anxious to understand clearly how we 'manage the fox-hunting we hear

so much about,' I proceeded to describe the sport in what I fondly believed to be simple and plain language, and was about to close the description with a hackneyed quotation from Whyte Melville, when A. suddenly interrupted with the crushing remark:

'And when you get near the fox you shoot him I guess?'

After that we changed the subject.

But though unable to think of any sort of hunting except in connection with the gun, these men were evidently tip-top authorities on all kinds of shooting obtainable in America. And they were not in the least self-opinionated or self-assertive. Indeed, they one and all seemed only too glad to assist a stranger. The question of chokes *versus* cylinders was thoroughly threshed out. How often before has it been—how many more times will it be discussed? Nitro-compounds these men preferred. Black powders they used only when shooting in damp climates where, so they maintained, no nitro-compound could be depended upon to retain a uniform strength for over nine or ten months. Naturally they declared powder manufactured in the States to be superior to powder made over here, and they would not even admit that our guns could shoot as well as theirs.

'Anyway, your guns don't shoot any better,' was the greatest concession allowed.

When we ceased shooting we had collected all the duck and laid them out in rows. My companions classified every bird almost at a glance, but again the names used were local names merely, and therefore practically useless to me. They were bubbling over with yarns of all sorts, these Utah sportsmen. One of them had a friend 'that fond of clams' that he would continue eating them and flipping the shells over his shoulder 'until the mountain of shells behind him was so high that the top ones rolled back over his shoulder and fell on his toes.' Then A. began to 'blow' about the size of the States as compared with the size of the British Isles, and did not seem in the least disconcerted on being reminded that England owns some 250,000 more square miles of territory in the States than America herself possesses.

And so the time slipped by pleasantly enough, until the sun slowly became cooler and the faintest of westerly breezes stirred the air.

'We must get a move on us,' A. said, as he filled his pipe for about the fiftieth time and slowly scrambled to his feet. 'We will draw lots who gets the horses, as we sleep here to-night.

To-morrow we go further. It is not well to bring horses over night near the next day's hunting-ground, as these duck seem somehow to think that horses mean danger. But anyhow you wouldn't see near so many duck here to-morrow if we did stay,' he continued, still addressing me. 'One day's shooting scares them for several days, especially when the execution has been as steep as it has been to-day. To-morrow all these dead duck will be sent for. To-night we must see to them.'

The task of walking to our previous night's resting-place and fetching the horses fell to B., who did not seem well pleased thereat.

'We move to a fresh part now,' A. said to me as we set out once more; 'the ground lies further inland, about a mile from here. A lot more shooting yet, I can tell you.'

And so there was. It was A. who stood near me this time, almost completely concealed, and he shot fully as well as his friend. The excellent 'hand and eye acting in unison' theory, of which we read and hear so much, was certainly put into practice most effectively by these two men. We saw far more small duck now than in the morning —forgive the unornithological classification—and though A. expressed annoyance at the absence of the larger species, to my mind the former afforded far better sport. Our dogs, mongrels that many an English sportsman would not condescend to glance at, behaved admirably. 'Bad 'uns to look at, but good 'uns to go' they were in the highest sense.

A. STOOD NEAR ME, ALMOST COMPLETELY CONCEALED

They seemed to mark down every duck that fell, and though sent out to retrieve only at fairly long intervals, but seldom missed a bird. Towards nightfall the duck came slashing overhead in steadily

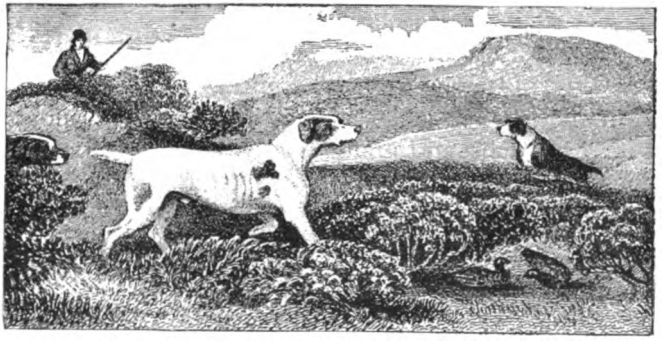
increasing numbers, paying little or no attention to the sound of our rapid fusillade and apparently forgetful of the morning's havoc. Only when they caught sight of a human being were they in any way scared, and even then the fear of danger did not last long. How different from our British wild fowl! But they will not retain this delightful feeling of security for long. Already in several of the States wild fowl are annually growing warier. In some parts they are said to be growing scarce. In Utah, in parts of Nebraska, in parts of Colorado and California, and in many of the other States they are still plentiful enough, but in order to find them it is necessary to get well away from railroads and from civilisation in general. Probably the day will come when wild fowl are as scarce in the States as buffalo are now, but we shall not see that day, and when it arrives the buffalo, too, will most likely be extinct.

It was now nearly dark, and the incessant swish swish, now loud, now faint, now quickly approaching, now rapidly departing, now approaching and growing louder on this side and growing fainter on that, or possibly advancing quickly from opposite points of the compass, still continued. Sometimes a string of duck would pass within twenty yards of the guns and appear to be so close that one almost refrained from firing lest the birds might be blown to pieces. Sometimes it seemed necessary to risk a long shot, and as assuredly as both barrels were emptied at long shots several duck would come swishing past within easy range. Again and again I saw the double flash of A.'s deadly gun and heard the thuds follow it, though A. himself was now almost invisible in the darkness. And as the darkness increased the echo of the reports seemed to grow louder, seemed to roll away farther and farther, and to re-echo again and again and again in the far distant mountains. In the far distance, too, the low quackings of large gatherings of duck feeding could be clearly heard, also the noisy, quarrelsome or greedy ' quack quack,' ' quack quack ' of apparently each and every duck in the small and insignificant bunches. Why is it that a large concourse of wild fowl is so much quieter than a small gathering? No writer upon sport has yet, I believe, started a theory about this, though in all conscience we are theoretical enough as a rule concerning matters appertaining to sport.

And soon we were once more in total darkness. The duck could be heard but not seen. The slight breeze was beginning to increase, and it made the air chillier than it had been during the previous night.

Gradually the sound of wings subsided, and the ' quack quack,'

'quack quack' was heard only at long intervals. Then it ceased entirely. And presently the strange, awe-inspiring stillness, almost painful in its intensity, that had so much impressed me upon the previous night, gave place to a low murmuring as the breeze passed slowly along the valley. Once more we lighted a fire and set to work to cook the chief meal of the day. A delightful day it had been too, and really capital sport we had enjoyed, and one felt regret only at the thought that friends over here had not been with us.



THE GREY STAG OF CORRIEVEAN

BY PERCY STEPHENS

THE grey stag had been well known all over the north-west of Ross-shire for two or three years, appearing now in one forest and then in another, for such trifles as deer-fences did not appear to affect its movements in the slightest. It was an extraordinarily light-coloured beast—so light as almost to merit its sobriquet of grey—and carrying an exceptionally fine head; and I think I may safely assert that not only had no stag in the Highlands ever been more persistently hunted, but that none had ever had so many hairbreadth escapes of death. Time after time had it baffled the most crafty stalkers and the most unerring rifles. No Peninsular veteran could have been more accustomed to the sound of bullets, nor, apparently, have treated them with greater contempt. The brute seemed to bear a charmed life, and fifty years ago would only have been deemed vulnerable through the medium of a silver bullet; and, in its way, it had acquired a more than local fame. Letters about it had appeared in the newspapers, and in more than one country-house or club smoking-room had we listened to long discussions about it during the preceding winter.

Consequently we were intensely delighted when, early in July, Colin MacDonald, in an excited epistle, the orthography of which I will not inflict on my readers, reported that so celebrated an

animal had actually taken up its quarters in our modest forest of Corrievean. Weekly bulletins from the same source kept us fully *au courant* with our distinguished visitor's movements. 'The grey beast had been seen again in the Corriedhu;' 'Angus had spied the grey stag on the open moor on Friday, and it had one horn nearly clean of the velvet, and there were six points on it;' 'The grey stag had taken up its quarters in the birch-wood by Loch-nan-Caillach;' and so forth, until we ourselves, cooped up in hot, smoky London, grew to share in our stalker's enthusiasm, and to indulge in daydreams of how we would circumvent the grey stag when once we got down to the Highlands.

Corrievean is not a large deer-forest, but, for its size, it is probably one of the best in Scotland, being always good for some score of stags and as many hinds, and affording, in addition, moderately good grouse-shooting on a part of the ground quite distinct from the deer-forest. Then, too, there is a capital little salmon river and very good sea-fishing; so that altogether it is a charming little place. One of its great features is the large amount of timber in the forest, which affords most excellent shelter to the deer, both against the summer solstice and the winter storm; and it was no doubt due to this attraction that the grey stag had selected Corrievean as a pleasant locality in which to pass the autumn.

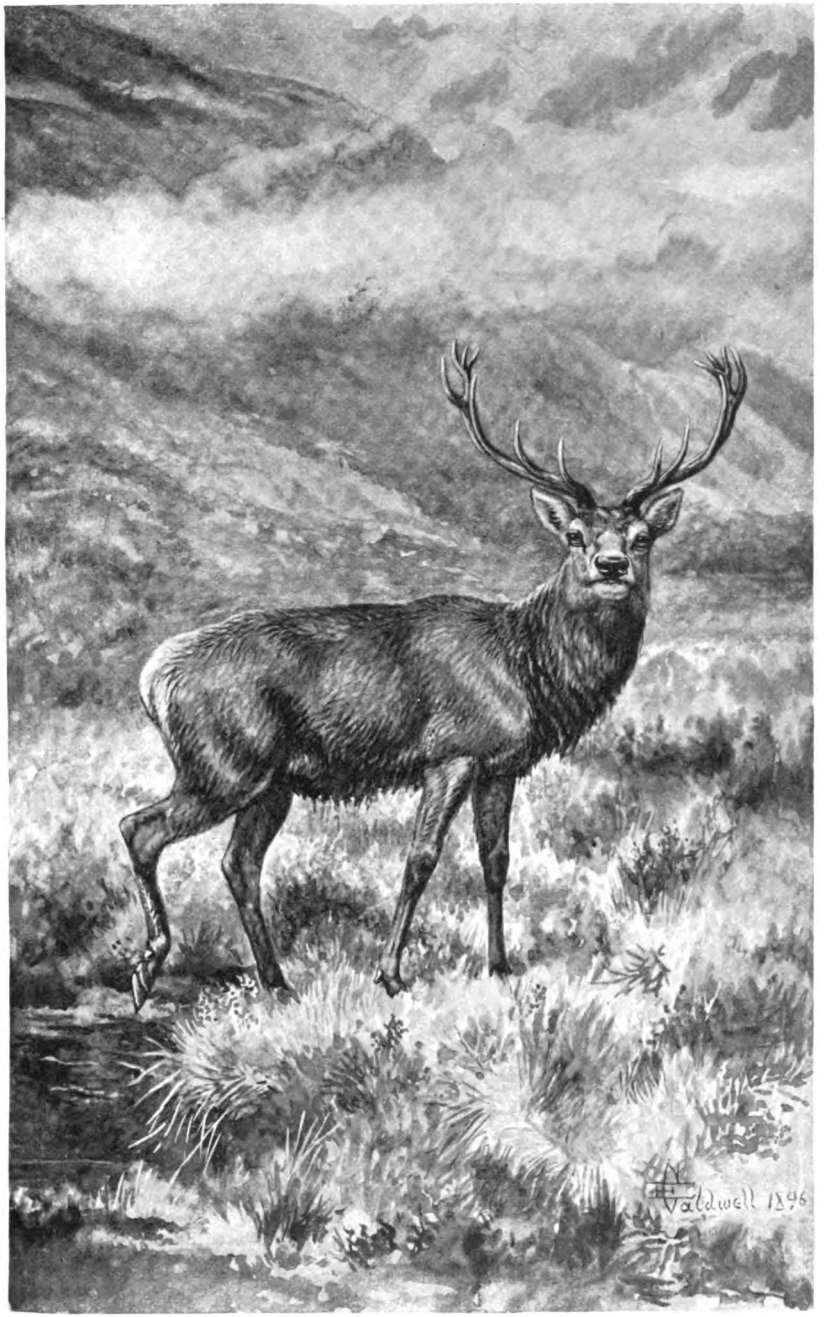
Well, we arrived there on August 10, and were not very long in making the grey stag's acquaintance. On the 'Twelfth,' when we were shooting on a flat, heathery tract, not far from the lodge, where deer were rarely, if ever, seen, there suddenly rose out of a peat-hole a huge stag which, despite the black mire with which it was covered, we had no difficulty in recognising as the famous grey beast of which we had heard so much. Although we were a large party of men and dogs, and barely a hundred yards distant, it stood for at least a minute coolly staring at us, and then, without showing any particular signs of alarm, quietly trotted off, stopping once or twice to look at us again.

It was, I think, the largest Highland stag I ever saw, with a magnificent head, already clean of velvet; and I need hardly say that the whole party were much excited by its appearance. Colin, in particular, could talk or think of nothing else for the rest of the day. 'Ay, that wass him, the grey teffle,' he kept repeating. 'Now we will pe aple to show those fellows at Inveronaig how to shoot,' Inveronaig, be it explained, being a neighbouring forest, where the grey stag had been shot at four times unsuccessfully the previous season, and between the head

stalker of which and our own retainer there existed considerable rivalry.

As it was a very early season, and there was no saying how long our guest might stay with us, we decided to begin stalking at once; and for a week or more we stalked and stalked, but never caught sight of it. Other deer we saw, but never the grey stag, although we hunted every nook and corner of the forest, until we began to dread that it must have moved on. But everything comes to him who waits, and late one afternoon we came, rather unexpectedly, on the great beast, contentedly feeding in company with some half-dozen hinds and two smaller stags. It was, as it happened, a very easy bit of stalking to get within shot, though we had to wait some time for a fair chance, as the other deer kept getting, *more suorum*, in the way; but at last we got a really good broadside chance, and, as we deliberately brought the sight of our rifle to bear on the brute's shoulder, we already looked on him as 'our meat;' and to this day we cannot tell how such failed to be the case. We were perfectly cool, had an excellent position to shoot from, plenty of time for a deliberate aim, and a clear shot at but little over a hundred yards; but the awful fact remains that the first barrel was a clean miss, and the second, hurriedly 'put in' at 250 yards, proved equally fruitless; and sadder or angrier men than Colin and ourselves, as we wearily tramped home, you could not have found in Scotland that night. Three days later we got another—this time more difficult—shot at the grey stag, and missed again!

Well, to cut a long story short, for the next three weeks that infernal stag continued, like the Frenchman's snipe, to afford constant, if somewhat stereotyped, sport both to ourselves and our friends. The cunning with which it baffled Colin's most crafty stalks was only excelled by the extraordinary luck by which it invariably escaped the bullets which from time to time were discharged at it; and at last we ourselves began to despair of ever bringing about its downfall, and became inclined to agree with Angus, our head gillie, that there was something 'no fery canny' about the brute. Nay, even as in mediæval times people used to employ a hired bravo to rid them of their enemies, so did we send for Cholmondeley Beaumont, the most renowned deer-stalker of the day, and a shikari who had killed big game all over the world. Cholmondeley came with alacrity and confidence, obtained an easy chance at point-blank distance, missed, and left us the next morning, imploring us, almost with tears in his eyes, not to sully his professional reputation by talking about his mis-



COOLLY STARING AT US

adventure. Finally, having harboured the stag in a corrie whence escape seemed impossible, we tried to drive it; but the brute broke straight back through the drivers, made a long circuit, and then coolly came and stood on the sky-line of a hill *behind* the line of rifles, whence it watched the proceedings with apparent interest and, no doubt, considerable amusement.

It was about this time, when our gloom was at its deepest, that a diversion was effected by the arrival of the Boy. An appealing letter had come from a disconsolate mother in far-distant India, ignorant, let us charitably believe, of the exigencies of the accommodation of a Highland shooting-box, imploring us to take in her only son, as measles had broken out in the South-country village where he was spending his holidays. He could not go back to Eton for another fortnight, there was nowhere for him to go to, and so forth; and this piteous appeal so worked on the feelings of another mother's heart at Corrievean that she insisted on the Boy's being asked; and, accordingly, one fine day up he turned. And before he had been thirty-six hours in the house every soul in it, from its tender-hearted mistress down to Jeanie the kitchenmaid, heartily wished him back in the measles-stricken hamlet.

IT CAME AND STOOD ON THE SKY-LINE BEHIND

It was not so much his mischievous habits—though these were bad enough—as his general offensiveness that caused him to be so cordially disliked. An only child, thoroughly spoilt at home, he had been just long enough in a second-rate house at Eton to acquire a full amount of public-school cheek, without any redeeming polish to counterbalance it. He was one of those odious urchins who cannot catch your eye without making a grimace at

you, who are never happy unless they are attracting 'notice' in some way or another, and on whom no amount of snubbing has any effect. He would give an opinion loudly and confidently on any subject, from cookery or theology to the scenery of the Highlands; he stole cigarettes and tobacco, and consumed them surreptitiously in out-of-the-way corners; and then, too, although proof was rarely brought home to him, he was always playing some monkey-like trick on his elders and betters. His was the cunning hand that mixed pepper with Colonel McMurdo's snuff; that substituted 16- for 12-bore cartridges in Snapshot's cartridge-bag (a trick that was not discovered until the enraged owner was five miles from home); that embellished the photograph of Miss Turtledove's *fiancé* with spectacles and an imperial; and, in fine, that was at the bottom of a hundred similar grievous offences against property or dignity. He was, alas! too big to whip, and hospitality forbade us to turn him out of the house.

What with the combined vagaries of the Boy and the grey stag, life did not pass so placidly as usual at Corrievean, and we all looked forward with much anticipation to the time when the former would return to his studies 'neath 'Henry's holy shade,' and we should be able to give our undivided attention to the latter. The very day before the youth's departure was beautifully bright and sunny, and as the wind was in the wrong 'airt,' and we wanted to give the forest a rest, it was agreed that our whole party, ladies included, should join in a day's sea-fishing. Exception, however, was universally taken to the Boy's accompanying us, as on a former occasion he had not only proved that he could be an even greater nuisance on board a boat than on dry land, but had publicly succumbed to violent *mal de mer* at lunch-time; so it was gently, but firmly, hinted to him that he must stay at home. To our great surprise he received this intimation with the most angelic resignation, and so touched were we by this unwonted delicacy on his part that when just as the waggonette was driving off, and he came running after us with the request of 'Please, Uncle, may I shoot some rabbits with your little rifle?' assent was cordially given, on the understanding that he confined his operations to 'the little fir plantation.'

Now there were many fir plantations about the place, and, although the Boy knew perfectly well to which of them he was intended to go, that did not happen to be the one he had marked out as the scene of his afternoon's sport. Only three days before he had been allowed to accompany one of the gillies up into the forest to fetch down a dead stag which had perforce been left out

all night, and he had then beheld a sight, and made an inward resolve, which had occupied his mind day and night ever since. When quietly rounding one of the belts of timber which studded the forest, they had suddenly come on a feeding roebuck, of which there were always a few about the place. Never had the Boy seen, to his mind, so beautiful a creature, and he was considerably

A FEEDING ROEBUCK

surprised to find Donald, in answer to his string of questions, speak disparagingly, and even contemptuously, of it. One of Donald's statements appealed, however, very forcibly to his imagination, and that was that roe-deer were easy to kill. Now the youth was occasionally allowed to amuse himself by trying to shoot rabbits with a little ·220 rifle ; and as he gathered from Donald

that such a weapon was quite good enough to kill roe with, the idea of his being able to do so had literally burnt itself into the urchin's brain. Of course he knew that such a proceeding would not be openly countenanced, and that he would have to do it 'on the sly,' and he was terribly afraid of the wrath of his elders if detected; but he felt pretty confident that no one but himself need ever know anything about it, and as he gathered that roe-deer were not viewed with much favour by sportsmen—nay, Donald had even given him to understand that their presence was not considered desirable in a deer forest—he jesuitically soothed his conscience by the subtle argument that he would be doing his host a service by ridding him of this particular buck. He felt quite sure in his own mind that it would be perfectly easy to cut off the head of so small an animal with his pocket-knife: he could hide the body in the wood, and smuggle the head back to Eton in his hat-box, and then—— But at this point even the Boy's imagination could not do justice to the glorious picture of self-glorification which it had raised. He could only imagine the head as it would appear on the wall of his room at his dame's, and himself the centre of an admiring and envious crowd of lower boys to whom he was dilating at length on the ferocity of roe-deer, and the skill and courage required to overcome them.

Still, he had recognised there were great difficulties in his path; and now, as he stood watching the waggonette disappear in the distance, he felt that Fortune had smiled on him, and swept the worst of them away. Nor did the fickle goddess's favours end here, for when, having stuffed some lunch into his pocket, he betook himself to Colin's cottage to obtain the 'little rifle,' Colin happened to be out, and Mrs. MacDonald allowed him to go into the gun-room by himself to get it.

There was a goodly array of rifles in the gun-rack, and the little ·220 was the nearest to his hand; but the boy passed it over, and chose a ·380, standing next to it, once more stifling his qualms of conscience by the assurance that both were called 'rabbit' rifles.

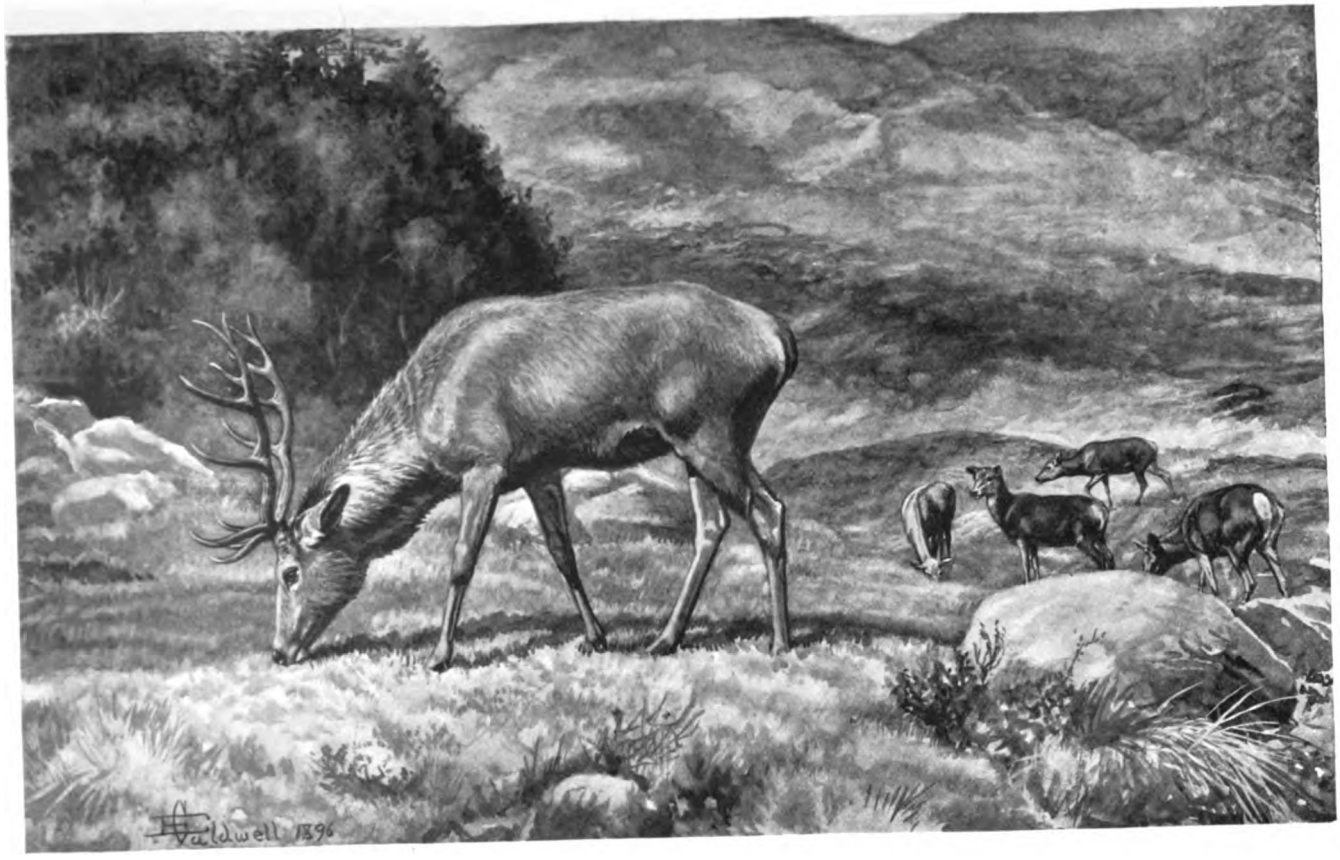
It was a lovely hot autumn day, and as the Boy panted up the steep slopes leading to the forest, he more than once repented him of his errand, and felt inclined to turn back. He had, as he thought, marked the little wood where he had seen the roebuck so carefully that he would have no difficulty in finding the way to it; but this, which had seemed so simple under Donald's guidance, now turned out to be a very different matter. For three mortal hours did the Boy struggle wearily on, always uphill,

wading through patches of green moss, scrambling up stony screes, splashing over apparently boundless expanses of tussocky swamp, and yet to all appearance no nearer his goal than when he had started. Twice he made his way to distant clumps of timber, only to find they were not those he was in search of: the awful stillness and solitude of the hills, despite the heat and shimmer of the day, seemed to cast a species of chill on him, as indeed they often have on many an older and wiser person than he; his courage began to ooze out of his very finger-tips, and he was just preparing to turn back when he suddenly found himself close to the particular wood he was seeking, and, with a beating heart and a curious empty feeling at the pit of his stomach, proceeded to load his rifle and sneak quietly round the corner of the planting. The Boy's knowledge of venery was, as may be imagined, exceedingly small, and he was enormously surprised and disappointed not to find the self-same roe feeding on the self-same patch of grass where he had seen it a few days before; but he comforted himself by the assurance that he had plenty of time before him; that the roe, which was probably lurking in the recesses of the wood, would be sure to come out to feed sooner or later; and that as he was very tired and hungry the best thing to do was to lie down, eat his lunch, and await the course of events. It was a charming spot for the purpose, a little oasis of heathery hillocks and green grass lying between the plantation—which as the Boy self-excusingly remarked consisted largely of firs—and the bare rocky face of one of the steepest hills in Ross-shire.

The Boy felt decidedly better when he had eaten his lunch: it was pleasant lying there buried in the deep heather, the afternoon sun was hot, and he had had a long walk and eaten a copious meal. Even at that height the air was warm and soft; gradually a pleasant languor stole over him, his grasp on the rifle relaxed, his eyelids closed, his head dropped on the heather, and in two minutes he was sound asleep.

The Boy had slept peacefully for nearly three hours when he woke with a start and a kind of uneasy feeling that he was no longer alone. The sun, which had been pouring its rays full on him when he lay down, was now slanting towards the west, and a cool, strong breeze was blowing; and for a short time he lay without stirring, half-frightened, as full consciousness of the loneliness of his position came back to him, and then, gently raising his head, looked round him. He was lying on the summit of a little knoll, completely buried in yard-deep heather; and below him was the little stretch of green turf on which he had

seen the roebuck feeding; but now, as he turned his gaze in that direction, what a different spectacle met his astonished eyes! for there, scarce fifty yards from where he lay, stood a huge animal, the like of which he had never seen before, nor probably will ever see again: a great stag, grey of coat, and heavy maned and antlered, was quietly cropping the short sward with quick, impatient jerks, stopping occasionally to keep a watchful eye on a small mob of hinds which were feeding a little farther off. For some moments the Boy lay as though petrified. Personal courage had never been one of his attributes, and the sight of this great beast so close to him would have prompted immediate flight had he not simultaneously reflected that in the event of pursuit speed would avail him nothing; then he determined to try the terrifying effect of the human voice on the lower animals, but *vox faucibus hæsit*, his tongue refused its office, and again it occurred to him that such a proceeding might be taken as a challenge, and lead to the offensive on the stag's part; and so he lay quite motionless and watched the great hart with mingled feelings of awe and envy; until, as he gradually recovered from the shock of his awakening, his heart began to throb less violently, and his courage to come back to him. Half insensibly, he fingered the rifle lying by his side, and wondered what the stag would do if he shot at it. To do him justice, he had not the slightest notion that so small a weapon would do more than 'tickle up,' as he termed it, so large an animal; and the Boy, who was a cruel lad, was an inveterate 'tickler up' of dumb animals, as every cat or dog that came within range of his catapult could testify. Slowly he pulled the rifle to him, and, pushing it through the heather stems, took deliberate aim at the stag. But here Prudence once more intervened. Suppose the beast objected to being tickled, and retaliated instead of taking to flight? This caused the Boy to hesitate; but his innate love of mischief overcame the voice of his good angel, and, taking steady aim at the stag's flank, he pulled the trigger. The crack of the little rifle rang sharply on the crisp evening air, and there was a simultaneous thud as the bullet went into something soft, followed by a hurried wheeling and rushing as the hinds swung together and then galloped madly away. But the grey stag stood quite still, with his noble head in the air, until for one sickening second the Boy really thought that his turn to be 'tickled up' had come. Only for one short breathing space did the stag so stand, and then, dashing furiously away, was lost to sight, and the Boy, scrambling to his feet, ran to the brow of the hill over which it had disappeared, to watch its course. By the time



QUIETLY CROPPING THE SHORT SWARD

he got there the stag was nearly a hundred yards off, still galloping so madly that the urchin thought he had missed, and cursed the loss of a chance of 'tickling up' that he would never have again. But even as he gazed he saw the great brute lurch in its stride, and then go staggering over like a shot rabbit.

The Boy was dumbfounded, and threw himself prone on the ground, half expecting to see the stag rise up and attack him;

WITH ALL THE CHEEK WASHED OUT OF HIM

but though he lay there for some moments no movement came from the grey mass down below, and at last, pulling himself together, he reloaded his rifle and cautiously picked his way towards it. Once he stopped and shouted at it, half frightened at the sound of his own voice; and then he tossed stones on to it; and finally, becoming bolder, he fired another bullet into it—into the haunch, by the way—but the lump of grey hide and brown

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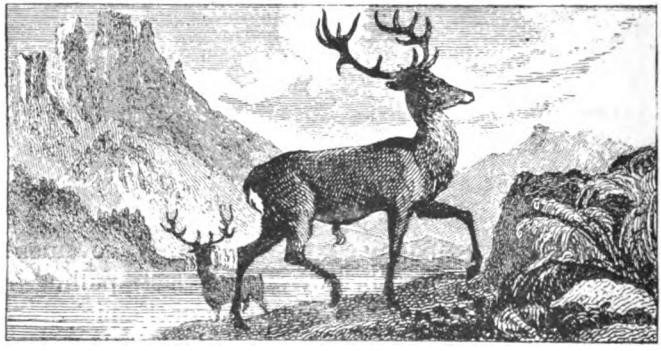
antlers still lay motionless, and at last the Boy, with a strange feeling of aversion and revulsion, walked boldly up and touched it with his foot. It was quite dead!

. . . . . .

The night closed in wet and stormy, and the sea-fishing party had been home some time ere the Boy's absence was noted; and, indeed, it was not until dinner-time that any uneasiness on that score was felt and inquiries made; but these proved so alarming that a search party armed with lanterns was at once sent forth into the storm to scour the forest; though it was not until nearly ten o'clock that a wet, famished, and blubbering urchin, with all the cheek washed out of him, was brought into the smoking-room, where a court of inquiry at once proceeded to sit on him, and managed, despite much prevarication, to extract an account of his day's exploits from him. I must fain draw a veil over the scene that followed his confession, for my humble pen is totally inadequate to do justice to it, but suffice it to say that it was a *very* dispirited Boy that started for the South, tipless and forlorn, at the very earliest hour possible, on the morrow.

The grey stag was brought down in the course of the day, and found to weigh nineteen stone and have a head of fourteen points; and I think that Colin summed up the situation and expressed our unanimous feeling when, after surveying its corpse in moody silence for some minutes, he turned on his heel and, with a 'splendid groan,' simply remarked, 'Oh! that teffle of a boy.'



RACING IN THE SOUTH AMERICAN PAMPAS

BY W. H. VOULES

'On Sunday, the 25th inst., a race, subject to the established code of regulations, will be run at this store between Señor Juan Gonzalez's brown horse "The Pig" and Señor Jose Maria Lopez's piebald horse "Terrible" for 500 dollars a-side; riders of 65 kilos each. The distance will be four squares[1] and a half, and the horses will be presented at the starting post at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.'

Such is the literal translation of the notice that caught my eye one day on calling at a camp store, about a league from my ranche, a few years ago, when I was sheep-farming in the 'pampas' of Buenos Ayres, some hundred miles from that town; and as I had never witnessed a *bona-fide* camp race, I determined to gallop over and see this one, especially as the Gonzalez named was the owner of the store, and an old acquaintance of mine.

On arriving there about 2 P.M. on the day of the race, I found an enormous crowd already assembled, and it was with great difficulty that I could get near enough to the bar to procure a much-needed refresher after my gallop in the sun.

The place was crammed with native 'gauchos' in holiday attire, drinking and smoking, while they listened to one of their number, who, accompanying himself on a guitar, was singing, in that nasal twang peculiar to the camp 'gaucho,' some improvised verses on the impending race, which was the general topic of conversation. Outside the enclosure which fenced in the store

[1] A square is 150 yards.

premises stood several unharnessed carts, whose owners had erected impromptu kitchens, and were busily engaged catering to the wants of those who had galloped from a distance to view the race.

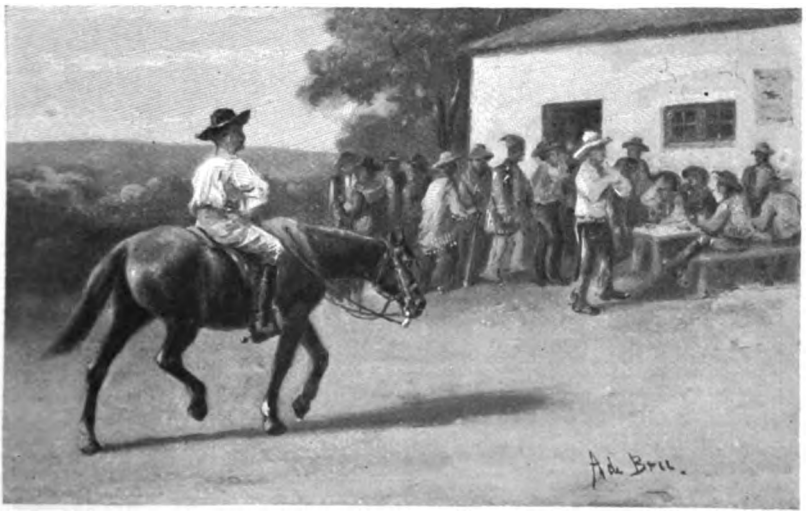
My friend Gonzalez soon caught sight of me, and made me go round to the back entrance, where, in a sort of private bar or ante-room, I found several of his particular friends, all partisans of the brown horse, assembled. Nearly all camp storekeepers make it their practice to keep one or two racehorses, as the cost of their maintenance is but trifling, and by making a race of this description they are sure to draw large crowds to their house; besides, they seldom or never go the whole stake themselves, as their neighbours are nearly all racing men, and are only too glad to assist with contributions of from ten to fifty dollars each.

The present match had been made by an old native land-owner who lived near, and Gonzalez told me that he himself had not fifty dollars on the race, the whole of the money, some 60*l.*, being made up by the old native and his clique.

'To tell you the truth,' he said to me in private, 'I am afraid we shall be beaten. The piebald is a very quick horse, and has been brought some thirty leagues to make this race. Its friends seem to think that it will jump off with the lead and never be caught. My horse, too, has never yet run such a short distance, six to ten squares being about its mark. However, I am not going to lose all hope, as the piebald is but a sprinter, and the old brown may give some trouble unless the other goes clean away at the start, which I very much doubt, as we have got one of the best riders in the country up on ours;' and as he said this he pointed to a thin, wiry native of about fifty, who was sitting at the table with a cigarette in his mouth. 'Take my advice, however,' he continued: 'if you are going to back my horse, wait, as I and my friends intend to do, until we see how they go in the "partidas," and then we are sure to get odds.'

My answer to this was to put a twenty-dollar bill in his hand, and ask him to invest it for me on the brown to the best of his ability; and then, after a modest quencher, and having listened for a few minutes to the conversation as to the chances of Gonzalez's horse pulling off the race, I strolled out to have a look at the course, which lay just in front of the house. Every camp store has its 'caucha' or race-track, as customers often wax warm over the respective merits of their horses, and then races are made up and run on the spur of the moment. These 'cauchas' are nothing more than two straight paths, each about three feet in width, from

which the turf has been cleaned off with a spade. They are some eight or ten feet apart, and run parallel to each other, often being twenty squares (3,000 yards) in length. The four squares and a half that were to be run that day had been measured out afresh and carefully cleaned, whilst a line of small posts with a white flag on each, and a thin cord running breast-high from one to another the whole distance, completed the arrangements. The side on which each horse was to run had been specified in the agreement that had been drawn up at the time the race was made; and if a horse knocked down the cord and crossed its



IT WAS DIFFICULT TO GET NEAR THE BAR

opponent's track, it lost the race, though it might be lengths in front when it did so.

As the competitors had not yet put in an appearance, I returned to the house, and stood for some little time watching the natives throwing the 'taba,' a game of chance of which they all are fond, and over which large sums of money are lost and won. It derives its name from the knuckle-bone of a cow's leg, with which it is played, and it seemed to me to be nothing more than throwing this bone from one to another over two lines some eight yards apart: if one side of the bone turned upwards, the thrower won; if the other, he lost. The spectators make bets among themselves, backing the one thrower or the other just as their fancy dictates. All the bets were made cash down, and the

stake of the throwers was held by a man appointed for the purpose, who performs the functions of a croupier.

As this individual charges a percentage on every second win, he makes a pretty fair profit during the day, though half the gains go to the owner of the store, without whose consent no gambling would be allowed. Games of chance are supposed to be forbidden by the authorities; but though a small body of mounted police were there to keep order, they seemed to take the gambling as a matter of course, and even made bets on the throws when their officer's back was turned, though that worthy, I have no doubt, had been squared by the storekeeper, and had no objection to the gambling going on as long as order was preserved. A couple of men, surrounded by a group of spectators, were playing a game of 'bochas,' which closely resembles our English game of bowls; but even this was played for money, and after watching for a few minutes I was sure that the two were experienced sharpers, and that the game had been got up to see if anyone would hazard a few dollars either on one side or the other. As three o'clock drew near fresh arrivals commenced to pour in, and I went to have a look at the brown, who, all sheeted and muzzled, was tied to a stake in the yard in the rear, beneath the shade of some trees. Its trainer was in close attendance, and evidently had a large stake on the race.

Three or four other horses similarly equipped and attended were tied near. These belonged to Gonzalez's party, and had been brought with the intention of running them against some of the many horses that had come to the meeting; but with the exception of one, a young half-bred, they were all 'criollos' (native-bred). The brown was in splendid fettle, and its coat shone like burnished satin. It appeared quite accustomed to the noise and confusion going on around it, and stood motionless, with ears drooping, half asleep in the sun. When well looked after, and fed for a month or two on maize, oats, and 'alfalfa' (lucerne), these native horses present a very different appearance from those that wander, unkempt and uncared for, about the camp, and pick up what they can get.

But now it was just on the stroke of three, and the owner of the piebald, who had passed the heat of the day under a clump of trees near the store with his horse, rode up to know if all was ready, while his trainer led the horse slowly up the track towards the starting place, followed by a numerous crowd. All preliminaries were soon arranged, each party electing his 'rayero' or judge, who are stationed one on each side of the winning-post

on the contrary side to that in which the horse they represent will run. They, in their turn, elect a 'tercero,' or third party, in case there is any difference of opinion between them in the event of a close race, and his decision is final. And now all was ready. The jockeys had been weighed, and stood by their horses waiting for the word to mount. But there was still a hitch. There was no one to count the starts and lower the flag, and to judge from the way in which the owners went about trying to persuade some of their friends to perform this duty, no one seemed desirous of the honour. By the rules of camp racing, which have been drawn up by the Provincial Government, the flagman is stationed eighty yards down the course from the starting place, and the horses

THE OWNER OF THE PIEBALD RODE UP TO KNOW IF ALL WAS READY

have to pass him at a gallop to constitute what is called a 'partida.' Eight 'partidas' are allowed, and if the riders are unable to get off on equal terms, and let go in one of these, they have another, which is known as the starter's; after which the flag is put up, and is lowered directly the horses turn their heads again towards the winning-post, and simultaneously commence to gallop. If either rider checks his horse or remains standing after the flag is lowered, he loses the race or gets a very bad start. Under these circumstances the post of flagman is no sinecure, and is often the means of making the man who fills it unpopular with either one party or the other, who accuse him, and sometimes

with reason, of favouring their rivals. The first one found was objected to by the piebald faction, as a partisan of the brown horse, for they knew well that, though their steed was like a flash of lightning in the start, they had one of the most experienced jockeys in the country against them, who, if he could only steal, by favour or otherwise, the slightest advantage at the fall of the flag, would give their horse all its work to win. Another, however, was chosen to the satisfaction of both parties, and the word was given to mount. When the riders are once on horseback, the whole stake is forfeited if one of the competitors retire from the fray; whereas, before they mount, an owner can withdraw his horse, even from the starting-post itself, at the last moment, and only pay the deposit. Directly the riders were seen on horseback, everyone knew that there would be a race, and that the reports rife during the day that the brown would pay forfeit had no foundation. By this time nearly everyone had left the store and mounted to see the race, and the spectators now formed two long lines from the start to the winning-post on each side of the course, down which the policemen rode, keeping the crowd back.

The piebald was evidently the favourite, as it was a well-known performer, and was running more within its distance than the brown; so offers of even money met with no response, and before the first two 'partidas' had been made, 10 to 8 was freely offered on its chance. Both horses were old hands at the game, and on first entering on the track seemed hardly able to move, but after making two or three short spurts, first at a walk and then at a trot, their blood began to warm, they broke into a gallop, and after the fourth or fifth 'partida' both were thoroughly excited and going great guns.

It was certainly an interesting sight. The jockeys in their shirtsleeves, and with a handkerchief tied round their heads, sat barebacked on their horses, watching each other as a cat does a mouse, and ready to take advantage of the slightest slip or mistake of their opponent, while the horses themselves, so sluggish at the outset, were now all fire and eager to be off directly their heads were towards the winning-post, though when pulled up after a strong spurt and turned towards the starting-post again, they walked slowly back, requiring frequent applications of their riders' heels and slight touches of the whip to reach it. There they remained perfectly still, with heads facing outwards, till they were brought round simultaneously for another spin, when they again dashed off at full speed like arrows from a bow. Seven 'partidas' had now been made, and the horses were going their best. Both

THE JOCKEYS SAT HARDBACKED ON THEIR HORSES

riders were calm and wary, but the one on the piebald, who had up to now been puffing at a big cigar, threw the stump away, and took a firmer hold of the reins. Each carried two of the native whips, hanging by a leather thong from his wrists, so that there was no necessity to change them from one hand to the other. The horses turned again for the eighth and last. Surely they would let go in this! On came the steeds, straining every nerve, and the ground rattling beneath their hoofs. The piebald was a little in front, though its rider kept it well in hand, and watched every movement of his opponent.

'Vamos!' (Let us go) he shouted all of a sudden, raising his whip as he spoke; but the other did not accept the challenge, so he pulled up the piebald at once, and, jumping off its back, led it up the track to the starting-post again, offering to bet 100 dollars to 80 on his horse as he did so, which nobody seemed disposed to take. 'The brown cannot keep up with the piebald,' was the general comment, and offers of 10 to 8 and 10 to 7 on the latter could be heard on all sides, mostly without takers, though a few of the more venturesome snapped up the longer odds. It was evident the two riders were trying to outwit each other, the one on the piebald endeavouring to make his horse run as little as possible so as to save it for the final struggle, while the other, trusting to the superior staying powers of the brown, sought to take as much out of his rival's mount as he could before he would let go.

'Gentlemen, this "partida" is for yourselves; make your horses run and see if you can agree to let go, as after this I shall put up the flag,' said the starter, drawing a red silk handkerchief from his pocket, which he proceeded to tie on the end of his whip; and the crowd began to move down towards the winning-post, except a few, myself and Gonzalez included, who preferred to watch the start.

It was grim earnest now and no mistake. On they came again, the piebald once more in advance, its rider bending over its neck with a tight hold of the reins, and nursing his horse all he could, the brown just behind sticking to its work with dogged pertinacity. Again the rider of the piebald challenged; it was no go, our jockey intended to wait for the flag and tire his opponent's horse a little more if he could, so the other pulled up his, which was slightly sweating with its exertions, and returned on foot, followed by the brown, whose rider did not dismount, but made a quiet sign to Gonzalez as he passed, and that gentleman immediately snapped up two bets of 100 to 80.

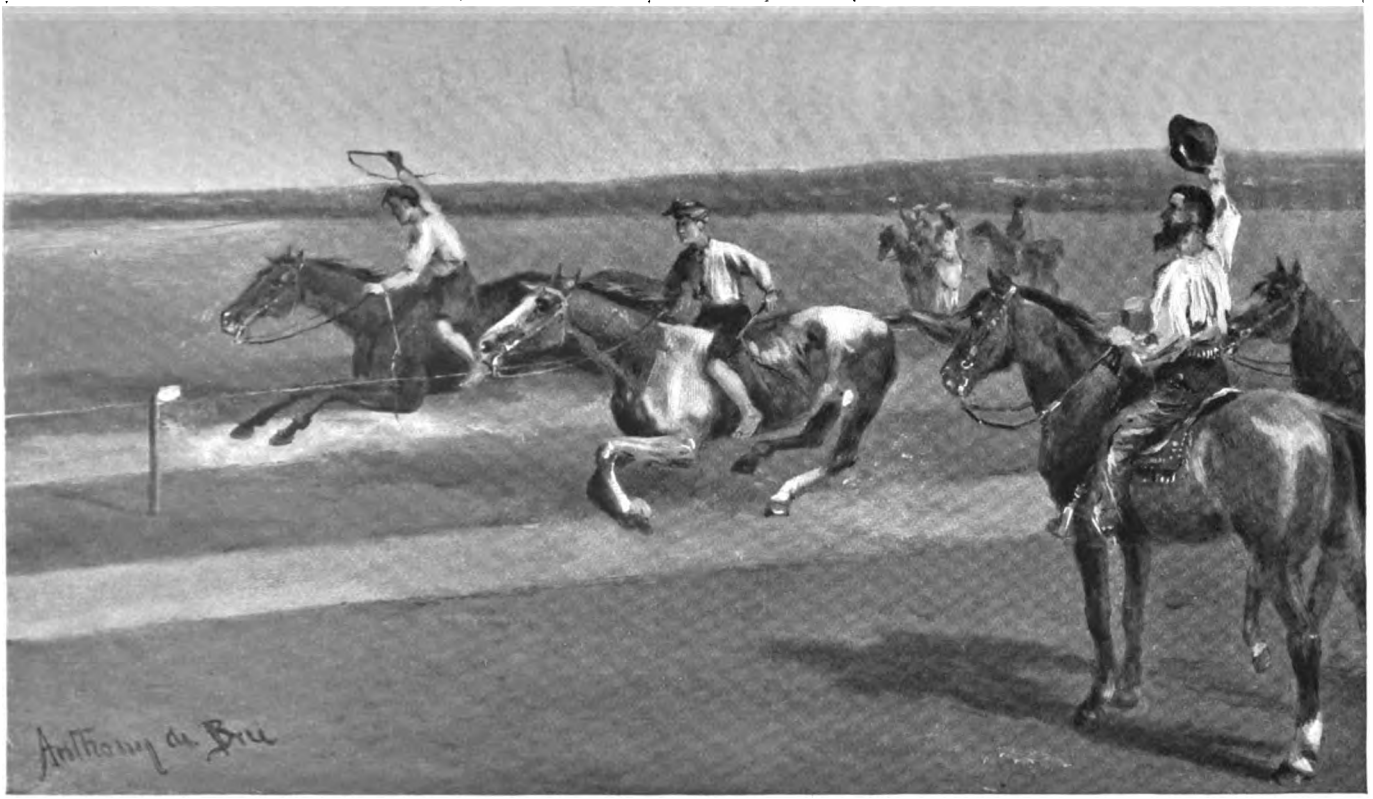
Up went the flag and we waited in breathless excitement. For

some ten minutes the horses twisted and turned about, each rider with one eye on the flag, and the other on his opponent, hoping to catch him at a disadvantage. First one and then the other rushed off at full speed, but the one who was last to turn pulled up his horse before it could break into a gallop, and the starter gently dropped the flag which he was holding over his head. They turned again, and again the rider of the piebald started off, watching the flag which was once more held aloft, and challenging as his horse commenced to run. 'Esperame, Esperame' (Wait for me), replied the other, and as his rival slightly checked his steed to do so, 'Vamos!' he cried, and simultaneously both riders' whips fell on their horses' flanks. The cute old jockey had obtained the advantage he sought, and forced the other to let go. His quick eye had noticed that the piebald was changing its legs just as its rider challenged, and he let go the brown, a little behind it is true, but with his horse well in hand and running straight and strong. Down went the flag, and they were off. For some eighty yards or so they ran neck and neck, both riders plying their whips, but then the superior speed of the piebald began to tell, and it forged ahead, recovering the ground it lost at the start.

Directly it did so its rider ceased to use the whip, and bending over his horse's neck urged it forward with voice and heel only. Down the course the horses flew, the brown responding gallantly to its rider's calls, though he had never taken the whip off it from the start, and we followed at full gallop. 'A hundred dollars on my horse!' shouted Gonzalez excitedly as he saw the rider of the piebald raise his whip again, and begin to ride his horse, though yet 100 yards from the winning-post. 'A hundred to fifty, a hundred to twenty on the brown!' he shouted again; but there were no takers, and we galloped down to the post to learn that the brown, running on gamely all the way under the whip, had got up and beaten its opponent by half a length.

'Thanks to the start,' said Gonzalez, as we followed the victorious jockey to the scales; 'if the piebald had got clean away at first my horse would never have caught it; but the struggle in the first hundred yards to get on terms with the brown again took all the steel out of it, and it was sweating before they started.'

Both riders seemed more distressed by their exertions than the horses themselves, and though I examined the brown to see if it showed any signs of punishment, I could find none; indeed the rider who was quite cool again, and had another cigarette already in his mouth, informed me that he was only flicking his horse all the way down the course, and gave it but two or three



DOWN WENT THE FLAG, AND THEY WERE OFF

smart cuts in the last fifty yards just as they reached the crowd to prevent it from hanging back.

'I do not believe in whipping,' he added, 'for these straight-cutting whips are severe, and a horse curls up and will not run under the lash. All this brown wants is a slight reminder to let it know what to expect if it does not try its best;' and he patted the neck of the horse, which was eating its afternoon ration with evident relish, as it had been kept on short commons all day to make it run light.

We now adjourned to the store, where both owners and their immediate following were engaged in emptying a few bottles to the health of the victors and vanquished, and after some skirmishing another race was made, to be run at once, between a stable companion of the loser and one of the old native's horses. This last, however, had all the best of the deal, as these 'gauchos' are very cute at racing, and know well that the losers would be sure to try to get their money back; so our old friend stood his ground until he had made a race on very advantageous terms for his horse.

On going back again to the 'caucha' we found some eight or nine couples engaged in 'partidas,' as nearly everyone comes to the races on their best horse with the intention of making a few dollars if they can, and sprints for sums of from two to ten dollars were now the order of the day, a lot of money changing hands in outside bets between the partisans of the various competitors.

Each couple made a 'partida' and then walked their horses back to the starting place outside the track, so as to make room for others—the crowd, who were all orderly and well behaved, being kept back by the police. I remarked that very few in these small races waited for the hoisting of the flag, but got their horses on equal terms and let go at the fifth or sixth attempt. The general distance run was from three to eight squares, and small painted sticks, stuck in the ground, all the way up the course, had each the number of yards to the winning-post marked on them. Every man seemed averse from running strange horses, and had generally some idea of the racing capabilities of the animal he was going to run before putting down his stake, which once down is forfeited if one of the competitors backs out. Many artifices are employed to hide the identity of the horses, though all natives are very quick at recognising those they have once seen run, and know them again in an instant. One old fellow, evidently a character in his way, kept repeatedly challenging a

young horse which everyone knew had been brought there on trial, taking care to select some of the best racers present when asked to name the one with which he wished to run; and on the owner declining his challenge, he finished by declaring that the colt was no racer, and that he would take one out of his cart, which was close at hand loaded with fruit, and run it twenty squares for fifty dollars. This challenge somewhat nettled the man to whom it was addressed, but after some further haggling and a careful scrutiny of the cart-horse in question, which appeared to have been pulling in the chains, as it was all covered with dry sweat, a race was made which the old fellow's horse, a black, lean and lithe as a greyhound, won in a common canter. I was told afterwards that the horse was a racer of no small merit, and was always kept well minded, but its artful old owner had thrown a bucket of water over it that morning, which, when dried by the sun, made the horse appear to have been sweating, while it had been put in the cart just before reaching the course.

The race which had been made in the store proved, as everyone expected it would, an easy victory for the old native's representative, who won in hollow style, and the owner then gave his opponents a chance of getting back some of their money by running another of their horses six squares with his 'mestizo' for fifty dollars. All the money was on the last-named, but in obedience to a tip from Gonzalez I refrained from backing it, as he told me that, in addition to being but half broken in, the colt was backward and very short of work. The result showed the correctness of his judgment, as its opponent had the foot of the colt all the way and won anyhow.

'My money is not lost, however,' I heard the old native remark to Gonzalez afterwards; 'we have the time of the other, and will run it again next week with a dark one I have at home; besides, the gallop will do my youngster good, and will open its eyes a bit. It is just as well, too, that Lopez's party should win one race; it will give them courage to run my chestnut tomorrow with the money they have won over this race, but not from us,' he added with a chuckle. This speech left me pondering, and enabled me to see that it would not be a very easy thing to win money from natives at their own game of racing, however sharp the party might be who attempted it. I noticed, too, several with stop-watches taking the time of various horses that ran, which they do very correctly, and depend more on it than we English do.

The sun was now going down; so, after tasting a piece of the

I GALLOPED HOME IN THE TWILIGHT

young heifer which the owner of the brown had immediately sent for after winning, and had had killed and roasted, hide and all, to celebrate his horse's victory, I bade a hearty farewell to Señor Gonzalez and his friends, and galloped home in the twilight, leaving the store still crowded, the natives having again commenced to gamble at the 'taba,' which would only be relinquished when it became so dark as to render further play impossible.

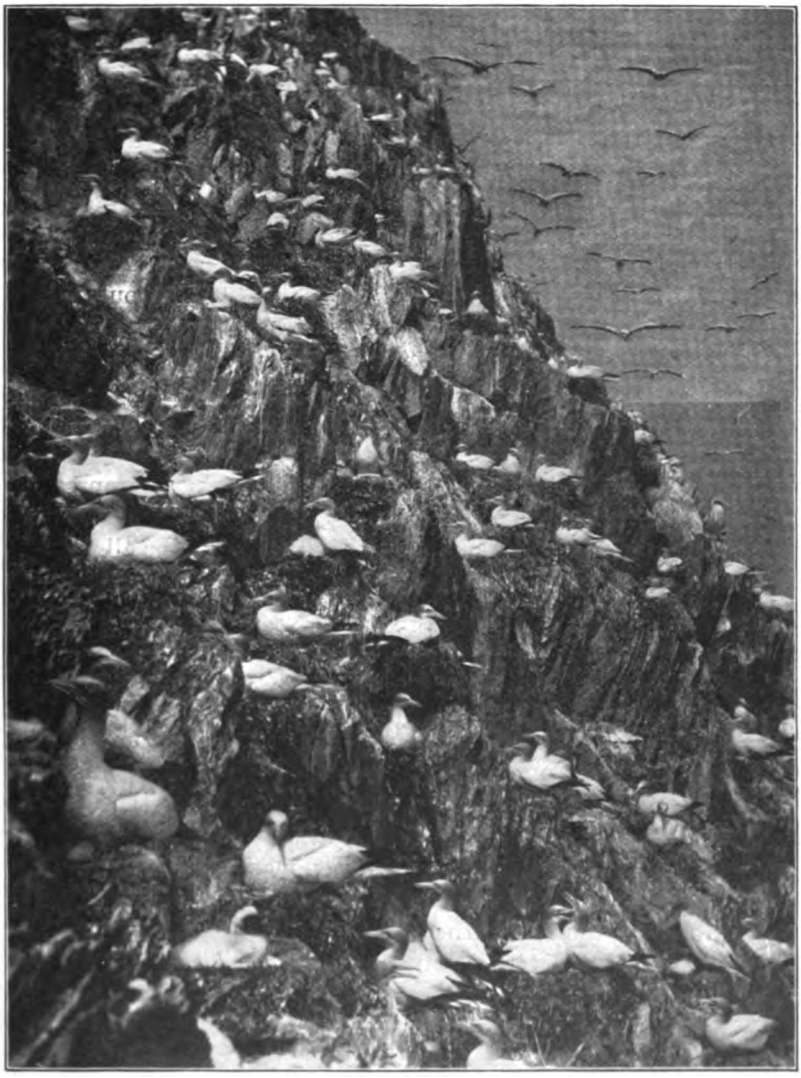
THE GANNETS OF THE BASS

BY HORACE HUTCHINSON

ONE of the oldest families in Scotland is that of the gannets of the Bass, and certainly one of the most numerous. It is reckoned that their numbers are not fewer than from ten to fifteen thousand—a very respectable army—and there are colonies and connections of the great main family who have their seats upon Ailsa Craig and other less notable strongholds. Ever since 'The Bass'—as the natives of East Lothian familiarly term that great rocky island that rises abruptly from the mouth of the Firth of Forth—has been known to history it has been the principal home of the gannets. It is true that in earlier days, when the storms of war raged around the rock with a more disturbing influence than the familiar storms of ocean, the gannets were less at peace in their homes. The Bass has afforded a refuge for more than one Scottish prince falling upon troublous days. Covenanters were from time to time confined in its dungeons to cool their militant spirit, and it was the last spot in Scotland to hold out in the Stuart cause. But since the very beginning of the eighteenth century, when the fortifications on the rock were demolished, it has been given over to the exclusive possession of the sea-birds, its oldest inhabitants and rightful owners.

Of course this round reckoning of their numbers, at between the ten and fifteen thousand, can be but the roughest estimate. The actual census is impossible to take, and for many months in the year not a single gannet is to be seen on the rock. They are wonderfully exact in the times of their coming and their departure, but whither they go no man can precisely say. Probably they are scattered over the surface of the sea, making it their playground and fishing-ground during the day, and their soft and secure bed at night. At these times most of us are familiar both with the birds and their picturesque manner of fishing. It is delightful to watch them passing, on great outstretched wings, overhead, as one sails upon their feeding-ground. Suddenly one

of them sees a fish in the water below him; he poises himself a moment to make sure of his aim, then, slanting downwards on half-closed wings, pressed ever closer and closer to his body as he nears the waves, he dashes into the water with a perpendicular



drop, sending up a shower of foam as from the blowers of a whale; then up he comes a moment later, swallowing the fish that he has taken in his downward plunge, and rises into the air again to make ready for another swoop.

This appears to be the invariable manner of their fishing, and it is a common tale that sailors take advantage of it for their capture by fastening a herring on a piece of board, painted to resemble the colour of the water, which they tow behind the ship, so that the gannet, seeing the fish and descending upon it, may break its neck as its beak strikes the board. This is the theory of the capture, and it sounds simple enough. Of course it may be true—it is proverbially difficult to prove a negative—but the writer has asked many coasting sailors whether they have ever seen any of the gannets taken by this means, and the answer has invariably been that they have often known the plan tried, but have never seen a gannet as the result of it. *A priori*, it is hard to conceive that a bird whose eyesight is so fine that it can perceive a tiny fish in the water fifty feet below it could fail to detect the clumsy apparatus of board to which the fish is attached for the purposes of its destruction. Perhaps it is as well to receive the narrative in the cautious spirit with which Herodotus accepted some of the strange tales that were told him in his travels. The gannet is familiarly known as the Solan goose, but it is doubtful whether he is such a goose as this tale represents him. In any case the name is somewhat of a misnomer, for he has scarcely any likeness to the true geese; and, after all, it is by a very ignorant choice that we have selected this wisest of birds, the saviour of the Capitol, as our modern emblem of stupidity. He is very nearly as acute as our alternative emblem of foolish qualities, the donkey.

There is a manner, however, in which, accidentally, he is often captured—in the nets of the fishermen. He may be able to detect the board on which is the herring, but even his keen eyesight does not enable him to take in all the holding qualities of the net that he meets in the water. A Skye boatman has confessed to the writer that he was once very much terrified by a gannet which he brought up with his nets at night, and believed for a while to be 'the ghost of his father.' But this bird had evidently been entangled in the net on the surface of the sea, for it was alive when the net was hauled in, and it was by the flapping of its great wings that the simple Celt was terrified. It has happened times and again, however, that gannets have been caught, in very deep water, in turbot nets. These nets, naturally, since the fish is flat and lies on the bottom of the sea, are set at the bottom, and from this circumstance it is easily seen the gannets must descend to a considerable depth in their dives.

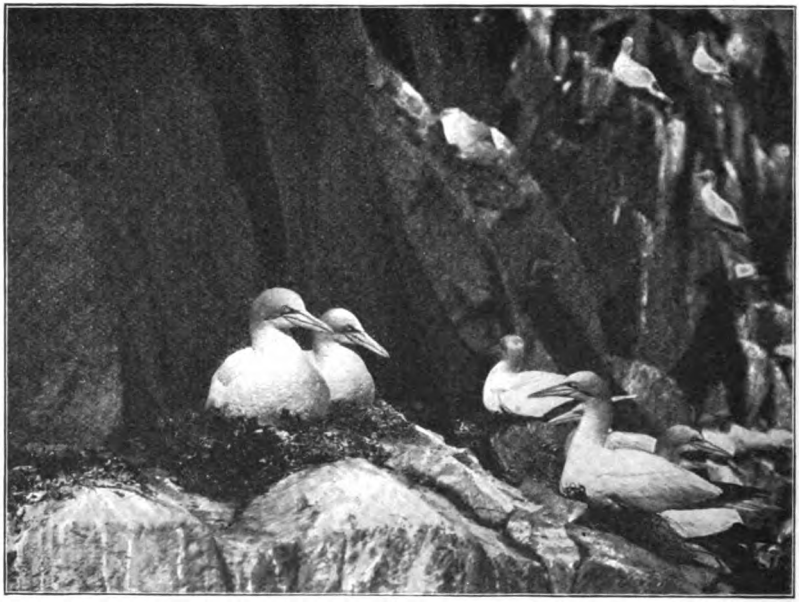
The excellent amateur photographer, better known to fame as

the ex-amateur champion golfer and hero of a hundred fights, Mr. J. E. Laidlay, who took the wonderful portraits to which this letterpress is merely subsidiary, had rather unique opportunities for observing exactly the habits of the gannets. Living on the mainland opposite, he was able with a glass to discern very accurately the date at which the wandering gannets gathered, as if by one accord, on the rock for nesting purposes.

This date during a series of many years was, as nearly as may be, March 1. The birds were as punctual as if they had

consulted the calendar. All through February not a gannet was to be seen on the rock. On the first day of March, or within a day either before or after that date, the terraces would be densely thronged by them. Forthwith they would begin upon the domestic business for which they had arrived, jostling each other for the best nesting places, fighting and pecking, and flying about the great rock in a dense crowd. In order to take the likenesses which illustrate this article, the photographer had need to be a bold and active gymnast, as well as an artist. The cliff on which the gannets nest is absolutely precipitous; to scale it from below is out of the question. There is but one way of approaching them—by a rope, from above. To be slung down over the head

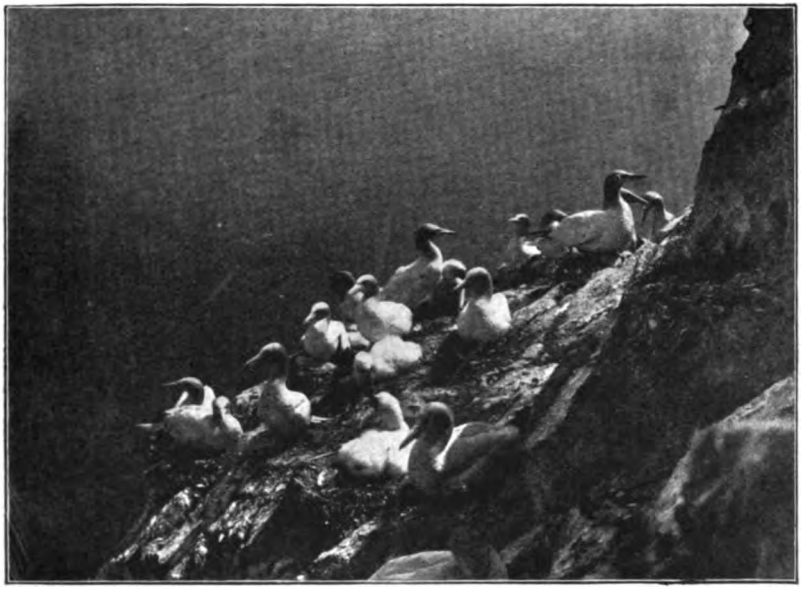
of a precipitous cliff, by means of a rope, with the sea roaring hundreds of feet below, is of itself not in the nature of a pleasant holiday; but when, to this initial difficulty, is added the burden of the heavy camera strapped to the back, the trouble of finding



a ledge on which to fix it for the purpose of taking the photograph, and the disturbance of all the senses occasioned by the perpetual passing of the great birds, threatening almost to sweep the artist from his perch with their great outstretched pinions, and last, but by no means least, the intolerable stench that arises from their nesting places—the whole forms a total of distracting influences which must have needed a very cool head and nerves excellently kept in control to contend against successfully. How successfully Mr. Laidlay achieved his purposes, though so beset with difficulties, and even dangers, these photographs sufficiently show.

The home of the gannet, in the nesting time, is in some respects a singularly unattractive spot on close acquaintance. From a distance it is beautiful, grand, majestic—there is no epithet of the grandiose or the picturesque that is misplaced in its description—but an intimate inspection reveals a *débris* of decaying fish and other loathsome substances that sorely offend the nostrils. The birds also have, for their salvation, in common with many other sea-birds, the faculty of vomiting the contents of their stomachs under the influence of fear. It is not certain to what

extent this pleasing feat is a voluntary act, or how far it is dependent on simple reflex action, but its effect is certain enough —to induce a sympathetic feeling of nausea in the beholder, and to lighten the bird's stomach so that it can fly at ease from the



source of its terror. Anyone who has seen the ridiculous little efforts at flight which are made by puffins whom a yacht has overtaken in the midst of a shoal of herring will realise the value of this power of lightening itself to the gannet. Its effect on the spectator, however, must be witnessed at close quarters to be fully realised. It is bad enough to stand even at the base of the cliff while sea-birds in any numbers are building above. The eggs, dislodged from the terraces as the birds fight for their places, are sent down so constantly that a sufferer, at Ailsa Craig, likened his experiences to those of an unpopular candidate for Parliament in the days of the hustings. The gannet, however, is an exceptionally good mother, and when, as often happens, the storms are raging so fiercely that the wind would blow the unprotected egg off the rocky ledge, she sits night and day to hold it in its place. One egg, as a rule, contents her; but if that single hope of the family be lost or taken from her early in the season, she will then lay another and hatch it out undaunted by the disastrous fate of the first. You will scarcely know her from her husband, so alike in aspect and plumage are male and female;

but the male, on close inspection, will be found slightly darker on the head.

But though you may frighten the gannet on its nest so badly as to make it sick—to the common distress, no doubt, of the bird

and yourself—you will with difficulty frighten it sufficiently to make it leave its nest. You may poke it with a stick, and it will respond with pecks at the stick; it will even attack your hand, in a savage and dangerous assault, if you venture on manual interference. This courage in the defence of its home, of course, makes the gannet a good 'sitter,' when once the photographer has reached and focussed it. It was thus that Mr. Laidlay was able to take such close and excellent photographs of the birds on their nests. And while those who have actually started on the incubating business are sitting for their portraits, according to the pictures exhibited, all their comparatively unemployed husbands, sisters, cousins and aunts—whom they reckon up by numbers far larger than dozens—are sailing round the photographer's head, wondering greatly at his strange appearance, and affording him a unique opportunity for a snap-shot at birds on the wing, such as is presented in one of the accompanying illustrations. In some of the nests—or on them, to be exact, for the 'nest' is rather the name of a bare

locality than of any aggregation of sticks or other bedding—are young birds in various stages of development, from the tiny puff-ball just out of the egg to the mottled cygnet (to continue the Solan 'goose' nickname) just ready to take its feeble flight down to the

water. Of these, also, Mr. Laidlay succeeds in giving us excellent examples. These black feathers of immaturity the bird will not entirely moult until about the fifth year, when it will acquire the snowy plumage, with black-tipped wings, of the perfect adult.

The young birds of the previous year—that is to say, youngsters of about a year old—take no part in nesting operations. They do, indeed, return to the rock during the summer, but not until the serious nesting business is over. Why they should return at all at this season is not altogether obvious, but return they do, about the time that the last cygnets are being launched into the ocean, and may very easily be distinguished by their mottled plumage. In the following year, still with some markings of their miniature black feathers about them, they will return with the rest at the beginning of March, and set up house on their own account.

Such are the principal modes of life of this most ancient and more or less respectable family, and there is no phase of it that the photographer has not portrayed for us in singularly effective

and faithful portraiture. There is a legend that the tenure on which the owner of the Bass holds this property is conditional on his sending twelve gannet's eggs annually for the supply of the Queen's table. Her Majesty has many singular and, one would suppose, rather embarrassing presents, from time to time, from foreign potentates, but few, one would imagine, whose disposal would trouble her more than these dozen gannet's eggs. By some people we are told that gannet's eggs are as good as plover's eggs, but these romancers are probably of the large

number of those who have not tasted the former delicacy. There are even those who assert that the gannet itself was considered a dainty dish on the tables of our forefathers; but they, as we well know, were men of wonderful stomach, to which we may in some measure ascribe the enfeebled condition of our own digestions. From a single personal experience the writer would be inclined to place the eating of a gannet at least on a level, as a feat of gastronomics, with the famous labours of Hercules. After all, the tale that the Queen's breakfast table is supplied from the Bass Rock belongs, in all probability, to the realm of pure fiction; and there is no ground in reason for interfering with these beautiful birds on the rocky island that they have made their own by a tenancy of countless generations.

RUNNING

BY W. BEACH THOMAS

NOTHING—not even a famous 'run'—lives in the memory like a good race. Almost every quarter-mile race I ever saw is as clear to me now, from start to finish, as on the day it took place. I defy anyone to forget them, those runaway races of Tyndall, that last fifty yards of Le Maitre, or, more lately, the great finishes by Lloyd, Monypenny, and Fitz-Herbert. But running, though at least as exciting as any other athletic sport, is somehow at the bottom of the scale *socially*. A runner, it is thought, is a person who runs not so much for the sake of the pure sport as for the prizes. The runner is often regarded as 'a bounder' and not seldom 'a pothunter.' Professionalism, which here brings no advantages with it, is rampant. An amateur may not under any circumstances run a professional, though, in spite of this and many other stringent regulations, the A.A.A. still find it possible to keep their ranks free from the professional-amateur, the man who runs for a matter of odd moneys.

A professional runner (considered very 'straight' in his class) once gave me the history of most of these running races. A young man found he could run. His father at once bought a stop-watch in order to time the son and his opponents at practice. To his joy the boy turned out 'a yard quicker' than the rest, and the fortune of the two was made. For some days or weeks the son ran at practice with lead in his shoes (a fact!) to trap other paternal time-keepers. When the great race came off, the son took care to run only second in all preliminary heats, so that the father, concealing his paternity, was able to take innumerable bets at long odds against the son for the final. The profits, deducting a sum for the stop-watch, were shared. Such is professional running, and, to tell the truth, not much unlike it is much amateurism. At the smallest of small meetings there is always someone 'making a book,' with a friend or two in the background trying ingenuously to discover if 'the man in the yellow shirt' means to win. Indeed, a genuine amateur cannot compete in local or even

London meetings without some risk to his reputation. So much is this the case that it is difficult to induce 'Varsity athletes to compete even in the amateur championships.

The result is that running as a pure sport seems to begin and end at the 'Varsities and Hospitals, though even here it appears to be under some slight social ban.

Perhaps, after all, the chief reason is that the majority of people are so ignorant on the subject. They consider the runner a mere selfish individual, unacquainted with the pleasure of combination. But, to begin with, it is clear that the importance and delights of 'pace-making' have never entered their heads. Now there is nothing in the sport more difficult or more delightful than this making the pace for a good runner. To take one instance, it was once my duty to make the pace for (as the papers say) 'the incomparable' Cross in '88. The post involved not only the necessity of running together every other day for a month and of acquiring at least as long a stride as 'the first string' (for a short-strided pace-maker is hopeless), but also learning to complete each of the first two laps up to an exact time: in this case the first in 1 min. 26 sec., and the two in 3 min. Further, in the actual race it meant a continual turning of the head so as to leave the inside for Cross and not for anyone else—all this necessarily spoiling one's own chance, of a first, or, possibly, even of a second place. The uninitiated laugh at the idea, but it is beyond dispute that most athletes cannot do themselves justice without a pace-maker; indeed, there are many instances in Oxford running of men who have run year after year entirely in this capacity, and have never finished a single race in the Inter-'Varsity Sports. Again, people look on an athletic team as 'a scratch lot,' but it is quite certain that the value of training together, of being a team, is at least as great as in any other pastime. Certainly no one who has walked and run over the Brighton Downs with the rest of the team during the fortnight preceding the 'Varsity Sports can possibly over-estimate the debt which Oxford athletics owe to Mr. Jackson for the introduction of this system.

Nor is training to be considered all labour. An afternoon on the running ground is as full of amusement as a day's cricket. The programme should be varied; for the athlete is no specialist. To learn the approved style of 'putting,' to practise starts, to run a good lap or two, to try a small jumping competition, to stride the hurdles, are a few of the varieties that may be studied in an afternoon's practice by the lover of the game, to the benefit of his special distance. Again it is thought that men are runners by

nature, not by art, while in reality a runner is *made* at least as much as a cricketer. Watch a beginner at the game, and his grotesque movements will inspire you with laughter. His hands work—like a prize-fighter's—up and down towards the nose; his body is back and following the legs at a considerable distance; the legs themselves are all bent as they touch the ground, not straightened as a trotter's should be. To see him at the start is equally ridiculous. In every college handicap that ever was run by far the majority of the grotesque stooping tribe will step back, if you notice, quite far back, instead of forward, as the pistol fires, the skilful runner having meantime advanced a full yard. Photographs of such events remind one of 'the incorrect attitude' in the old skating books. Certainly there is more in running than meets the eye, nor is it quite accidental that this branch of sport has appropriated to itself the general name 'athletics.' If for no other reason, it can claim at any rate the longest pedigree and has won in the past the greatest honour. On the whole, running has of late increased in popularity at the 'Varsities. Instead of only one meeting a year, there are now contests between the hospitals and separate colleges. One, between Keble and Trinity, Cambridge, is always keenly contested, and is likely to become annual. There are also meetings with Americans. The increase of popularity has brought a corresponding improvement in times. To take one instance, the record for the Inter-'Varsity mile has been taken down five times since '88, and the average for other distances has improved on the same scale—always excepting the weight and the hammer, in which events we seem likely to sigh in vain for another Ware and another 'Hammer Hales.'

This opportunity may be taken of reviving the protest against the maintenance of these two competitions to the exclusion of the half-mile in the Inter-'Varsity sports. Those who have run and watched this race are almost unanimous in preferring it to any other. It is, besides, a championship and an international event, and yet the absurd conservatism of the 'Varsities has successfully excluded it up to the present time, in spite of innumerable protests. Why should not the committees of the two clubs meet and put right this sorry anomaly? If, indeed, the defensive patriotism of either side fears for its temporary inferiority in this reference, then do not let the rule come into force till next year or the year after, only let something on the subject be definitely settled. There have been many fine half-milers who have never had the opportunity of showing their powers. Tyndall at

Cambridge would perhaps have robbed America of this record, and Cross, though he held the distinction for awhile, was forced to invent the race and collect a field for himself, not to mention many others who had power to do wonders—such as Pollock-Hill, Lutyens, Monypenny and perhaps at present Fitz-Herbert—but have wanted opportunity. It is a pity, and the change would be easy and popular.

The past year will begin a new epoch in the history of running. Athletics everywhere were good. The Inter-'Varsity Sports, remarkable for the finish of the quarter between Jardine and Fitz-Herbert, reached a surprising level, and, above all, the international meetings with America were at length brought to pass. What a terrible beating England received is a matter of history; but it is doubtful if the moral has gone home. It was clear from the times of the longer races that with any luck we could have won easily, while it was equally clear that we were quite outclassed in the sprints. Many excuses were found to account for these defeats, such as the heat of the climate, the voyage, the strangeness of the grounds. There is doubtless some truth in each of these defensive arguments, but I have a suspicion that, as the Americans hinted, the true reason lies in our system of training. This will also account for the universal inferiority of amateurs and professionals in sprint races. It may seem a paradox, though it should be a truism, that the shorter the race the longer the training and practice required. A winner of the Sheffield handicap once explained to me his system of training in detail. He said that after five or six weeks' continuous practice he would suddenly find himself a yard or two faster, but that he did not reach his best for another equally long or longer period. That is to say, for him (and he was slightly made) about *three months'* practice were required before he could do himself justice in a hundred yards race. Possibly the longer races would not suffer from an equally long period of training, but it is certainly not so necessary, so absolutely essential, as in the sprints. If amateur athletes were once convinced of this fact, they would be at any rate in a position to compete in pace with the professionals, with the Americans, and possibly in 1900 with the world at Paris. Train long and slowly is the moral. Staleness, so much dreaded, always comes from sudden overwork, never from length of service.

PIG SHOOTING IN ALBANIA

BY BARBARA HUGHES

AFTER rather a boisterous passage from Cannes, it is a relief to wake up and find oneself once more in beautiful Albania. The sea-sick passenger need have no more qualms when once inside the island of Corfu, as there is no occasion to go into rough water again for the rest of the winter; if he be a good sportsman and means to enjoy himself, there is plenty of game to keep him employed for some time to come. The scenery and lay of the land are remarkably like an enlarged and beautified Solent, with five ideal little harbours along the mainland, the town of Corfu representing our Cowes.

Pig shooting in Albania has many charms apart from the sport itself; being able to do it all from the yacht with no tenting or trouble of that kind is a great thing, and the delightful climate is alone worth coming out for. There is something unusually exhilarating about it: no lying in bed in the morning or difficulties made about the early starts; everyone comes down in the best of spirits, all bubbling over with excitement, all talking nonsense to the best of their abilities—in fact, in a mood that sees life through rose-tinted glasses, and which is experienced in few places besides Albania.

At 9 A.M. punctually we row ashore with six of our crew for beaters, seven or eight Albanians join forces, and off we go. The steep climb up the first mountain rather takes the surplus energy out of us, and by the time we reach our posts we are glad enough to sit down and survey the splendid scenery. The sun is delightfully warm to bask in while waiting for the beaters, although we have grumbled freely at its heat while making the ascent. The beats are usually about an hour's walk from the vessel, and a good deal more, of course, if you care to go inland; but we have never found it worth while, as the best coverts are oftener close to the sea. But it *is* rough travelling, as I found to

my cost the first year, when my poor boots were reduced to such abject wrecks as barely to fulfil the object for which they were intended! A few more walks and I should have been obliged to dispense with them altogether and go barefoot, for I fancy even that would be preferable to the mercies of a Corfu cobbler!

Whilst on the subject of the travelling I must not be so ungrateful as to forget to mention the services of the emaciated but all-enduring mules, which have been the partners of our travels and tided us over many difficulties both by land and water. But these valuable animals have also their disadvantages—namely, their indomitable stubbornness. One of their favourite tricks is to drag you bodily under a young and lusty bush of 'wait-a-bit' thorns, which results in an unequal struggle between your stout canvas jacket and your own capacity for sticking to the saddle. The mules seem to have an understanding with the thorns, and both combine to work the annihilation of the unfortunate rider. Therefore it is as vain to try to stop the mule as it is to detach the briars, and between the two stools one falls to the ground in a highly mutilated condition, torn and bleeding, to see the mule shake itself with unmistakable self-satisfaction. On the occasion I am describing I was too much upset to get on again, so I walked the rest of the way and sat down in high dudgeon to await such game as should be generous enough to risk their lives for my amusement. 'Where every prospect pleases, and only man or woman is in a vile situation,' I mutter disconsolately, as I find I have been placed first, which, as a rule, means worst, for various reasons. However, it does not matter in this case, as there are no animals about, and we see nothing in that beat, or the next—or others after that until one o'clock, by which time we decide to seek consolation in the luncheon basket.

'Nicolo,' or the 'brave old Duke of York,' as he has been called for his perseverance in marching us up the hill and then marching us down again, is in a mood to do full justice to his nickname to-day; he is head beater and placer of guns, and we all follow obediently at his heels, having found it much better to submit entirely to his guidance than to interfere in any way with his arrangements. But to-day we had expected him to be more considerate, as we had endeavoured to explain in the morning that we wanted to be taken an 'easy day' for the start. Our feeble efforts at talking the language, however, often resulted in exactly the opposite being understood from what we intended to convey, and no doubt that was what had happened to-day. The alternative of having an interpreter is a divided blessing, as

his interpretation is usually far removed from the truth, being rendered just as it suits his convenience, and one is powerless to contradict him, though one knows all the time that he is diverging widely from the original.

But to resume the story. On we trudge right over and down this range of mountains by means of such a tortuous valley that even the mules are unable to cope with it. The only path is over loose boulders piled up high in some places, then rolled along

A FAVOURITE TRICK

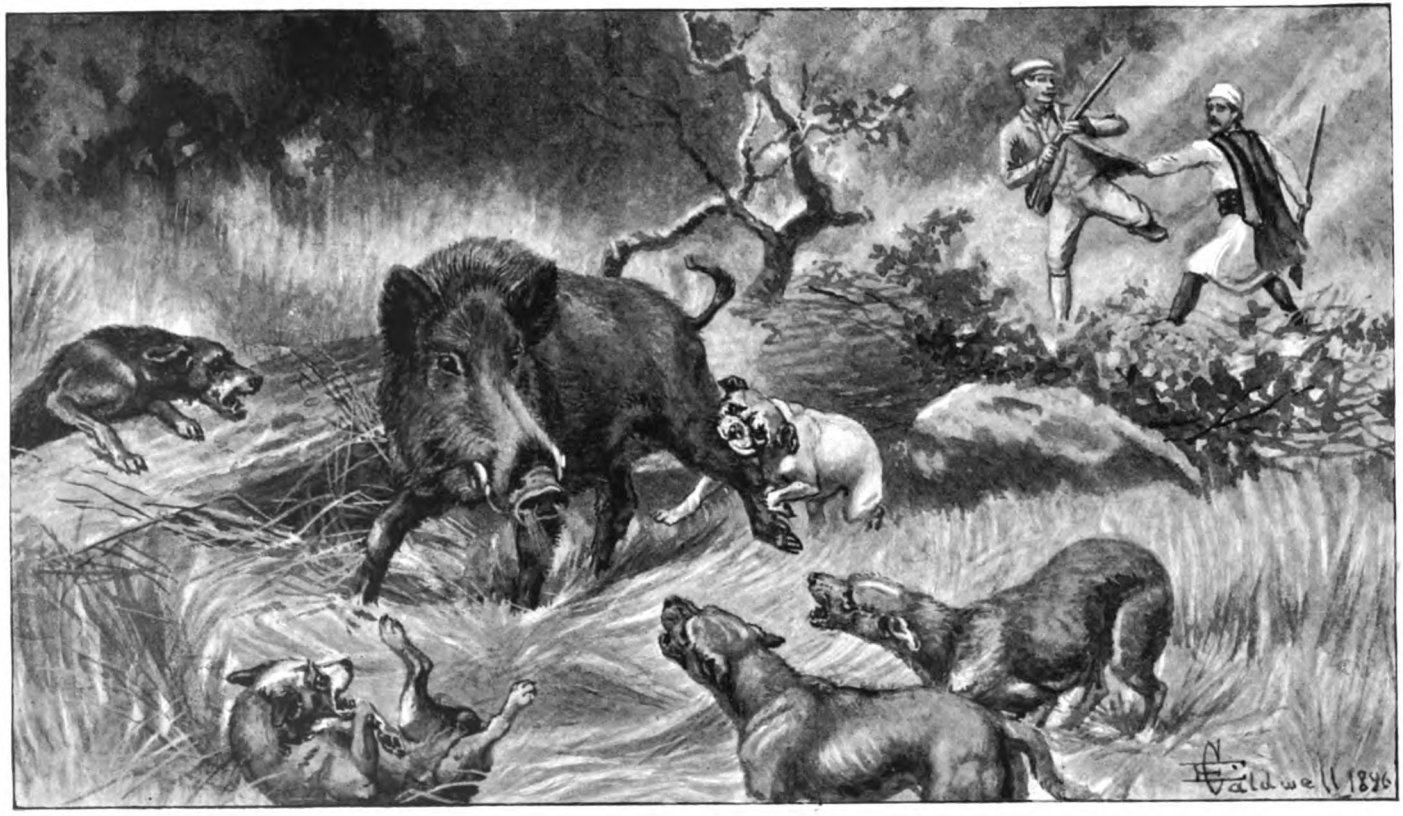
helter-skelter by the powerful torrent which has long ceased to rush down its precipitous course, but even now has left obvious traces of what its strength must have been.

At last we reach the swamp at the bottom, all very tired, hot, and cross; neither are we best pleased when we are posted, ankle deep in muddy water, with not a dry spot or stump to sit on. One of the beaters (who has been left on the mountain to direct the ones below) put up two deer (roe), which rush down

past G. at a tremendous speed; but they very soon part company as a bullet from G.'s rifle lays one low. This appeased our wrath somewhat, but still we feel that nothing short of a big pig will quite restore us to our previous good humour. And we get our reward. Suddenly the beater on the mountain raises a wild 'whoop,' upon which all the others burst into frantic yells and uproar for about a minute, and then a pause, when the man on the mountain is able to make himself heard and to direct the beaters so that the animals can be completely surrounded except on the side of the guns. This is a singularly good covert, as it is almost an impossibility for the game to 'break back.' The shouting again begins. 'Look out, sir! look out to the right,' and we all wheel round to see five pigs dash out some three hundred yards from G. It is a case of now or never, as they are making a bee-line right away across the swamps and not taking long about it either. 'Ping!' rings out the rifle, and to our delight—we won't say astonishment—the big one falls out and with hardly a struggle is dead, a clipping good shot at that distance, considering the rate the beasts were going. Elated at his success, G. must needs have another try at the retreating four, so he indulges in some wonderful quick firing and reloading practice for the next minute or two, as he has only a single-barrelled 265 rifle, and the pigs take very little time in making themselves scarce.

My attention is suddenly diverted from G.'s manœuvres by hearing the beaters shouting, 'Look out, miss! look out right in front of you!' Oh! the frantic, maddening, blinding excitement that seizes me! My heart beats to bursting, my ears sing so that I can hardly hear, and a sort of film seems to spread over my eyes, so that I have to shut them for a second in order to see straight and try to collect myself for a chance which is likely to be one in a million. But no, it is not quite that after all—only a deer! The poor thing, scared out of its wits, bounds out of the covert straight towards me, popping up and down over the spiky tussocks, and when for a second it shows a fairly good target—I fire! and it falls to leap no more.

Meanwhile, C., who was posted in the thick alders the other side of the covert, had been having quite an exciting time of it all to himself. The undergrowth was so thick that there was only one place where he could see to get a fair chance at a pig should one come along, and on that spot he levelled his gun. The warning shouts of the beaters followed by the quick 'splish splash' and rustle through the reeds were sufficient to prepare C. for the



SHOWING FIGHT

brown snout which very soon showed itself, exactly in the place where he was aiming. So without further delay he let fly his bullet and followed it up instantly himself in case his victim should want the final *coup de grâce*. This it did; but as the pig was now in the clutches of about six dogs it was no easy matter to accomplish, as he had forgotten his knife—or rather left it on board, as it was considered unlucky! One of the Albanians, who thought 'discretion the better part of valour,' had got hold of C.'s coat tail and was wildly pulling and entreating him to 'Oxa,' 'Porko no buono,' 'plenty more in the bush,' &c., which mixed gibberish signified his anxiety for C.'s safety when he saw his efforts to drag him away were unavailing.

The pig was now showing fight, and lashing out in all directions, thrusting his great tusks at the dogs, which were only small curs; and though they stuck to work gamely they were getting some nasty gashes. It ended in C.'s walking up close and firing right through the animal's back, so that the bullet afterwards lodged in the ground below. No doubt if the dogs had not been there the old porker would not have been so easy of approach, but its whole attention was occupied in warding off the vicious snap of the numerous curs, C. being thus able to get near unobserved. Two of the dogs were found to be badly ripped, and the pluckiest, a little French bulldog, was invalided for a fortnight after, with no fewer than five wounds. However, out of that little covert we had got two fine pigs and two deer, and as another pig fell to C.'s gun in the following beat, our peregrination was amply rewarded, and we went home rejoicing. The greatest number of pigs we have seen together was fourteen, and as bad luck would have it they escaped without a shot. We were just being posted, and were all unloaded; and though we tracked them for the rest of the day we never came up with them again. On two other occasions we have seen herds of twelve, once when they were all running along the edge of a steep cliff at Fetalia (of these we got two) and once at Stilo. The latter was my first introduction to pig shooting, so it is firmly fixed in my memory and rankles among the lost opportunities which are not pleasant to recall; but one must take the bad with the good, so I will not flinch from relating it.

I was posted on a little hill-side, almost in the covert, and could see splendidly all round, but not just under me where there was a steep dip and lots of thick undergrowth. Soon a large pig broke and ran past G., who had a shot, but on it went up the mountain behind him at full tilt, and he never gave it

another barrel. It subsequently transpired that he could not see it when once it had passed him, owing to the uneven ground. I was so taken up shouting out directions and jumping about with excitement at seeing my first pig that I never noticed a string of no fewer than eleven, which must have run just below me within

I NEVER NOTICED A STRING OF ELEVEN

twenty yards. Not till I saw G. pointing his rifle in my direction did I grasp that there were more pigs my way and that it was too late to have a shot. G., however, got one, although he was fully two hundred yards off, and I had never even fired my gun, though they had been so close!

Rather annoying, especially for a first experience. However, one lives and learns in pig shooting like everything else, but it made me feel savage at the time, as a chance like that does not come very often. How furiously and uncontrollably angry it makes one if something goes wrong with the beat or spoils the sport! For instance, when you are sitting in a conspicuous place where there is no 'hide' and an amiable Albanian insists on coming and keeping you company. By-and-bye you see a couple of deer approaching cautiously down the mountain straight for you. Up jumps your friend, seizes you by the shoulder, and with loud whispers and furious gestures points out the animals, who, needless to say, are by this time dashing away over the rocks never to be seen again; or, what is almost more galling, fall to some of the other guns. As one of these aforesaid insinuating gentlemen once said to me by way of consolation, after frightening away a whole lot of deer, 'But Effendi boom plenty morté,' as if my one idea was to get the animals slaughtered by someone. Spluttering with rage I endeavoured to explain my views on the subject, but soon gave it up as hopeless, as he only smiled suavely under my imprecations and seemed to think that I was commending his sagacity rather than otherwise. But the Albanian shepherd is a real good fellow all the same—cheerful, honest, anxious to please, and with a deep-seated respect for anyone or anything English.

The sport is very dependent on the weather, and you might as well save yourself the trouble and stop at home as go out on a wet day, for you are pretty sure to see nothing. Whether it is because the beaters do not work so well or because the animals lie closer I cannot say, but the fact remains that we have never got anything to speak of in bad weather. Thanks to a fine winter, our bag was a great improvement on the previous year, although we were not so long about it. That is to say, twelve pig and twelve deer in four months was our one year's record, whereas we got nineteen pig and nineteen deer next winter in three months—and we put this down quite as much to the finer weather as to the improved shooting. Our weapons were many and various, which arrangement has its advantages: there can be no dispute about who killed the animal if two people had fired, as the bullets will soon prove at the *post mortem*. The 'Paradox' was found a very good gun, C. getting nine pig out of his eleven chances. The '303' and '265' were also very successful, but as they were only single-barrelled it was necessary to take a gun. The ideal weapon for a lady would be a very light, double-barrelled rifle

or gun, warranted to kill at a hundred yards without the recoil of the 'Paradox,' which renders it unsuited to a lady.

The yachts which can be reckoned as regular migrants are the 'Otterhound,' whose sporting owner devotes himself almost entirely to woodcock, and the 'Christine,' whose owner is equally partial to big game or the trout-line. Other frequent visitors are the 'Lethe,' whose lady owner did some very good execution among the 'cock' this season, the 'Roseneath,' 'Kittiwake,' 'Geraldine,' 'Lufra' and ourselves.

It is not uncommon to hear pig shooting abused—chiefly by old Indian officers and people who don't know anything about it. 'So unsporting,' I have heard them say, 'to shoot a great, lumbering thing like a pig.' Yes, it sounds very easy and all that, but let them try it and they will see.

The owners of some of the yachts mentioned above are well-known crack shots, and they freely admit that a pig is by no means such an easy thing to kill as people imagine; indeed, I could tell tales of more than one real good marksman who has missed pigs clean, and not been able to account for it. A pig certainly offers a large target when running with his bristles up, but a very deceptive one, as it is no good hitting him *any*where—you must get him in the heart, or on he goes. Not once in a dozen times do you have a chance in the open either, for in the swamp there is the dense undergrowth, and on the mountains it is worse still, as it is all so rugged that pigs keep getting behind the rocks and over the brows; they are always on the move, never seeming even to hesitate. That is one reason why pigs are harder to kill than deer, as the latter occasionally stop for a look round, which gives a chance for a fair rifle-shot, but pig—never. Therefore, to reckon the pace and the distance and how far to shoot ahead requires no little judgment and some practice.

Why it should be unsporting to shoot pig in a country where 'sticking' is an impossibility I fail to see, for it gives you plentiful opportunities of testing your skill, perseverance, and nerve, if not pluck, on occasions. And, after all, you are only demolishing an utterly useless and very destructive animal.

I hope those men who disapprove of ladies shooting will not have got as far as this, or I am afraid they will have had some of their finer susceptibilities wounded, and fancy women are going irreclaimably to the dogs because they are becoming more appreciative of the good things that make life enjoyable. Fortunately it has been my lot to fall among men who hold

larger views and prefer to share their amusements with their womankind, and as long as it pleases them to take me, and likewise me to go, I shall not stay at home.

On rough or wet days you can resort to duck, snipe, pigeon, or woodcock shooting. The latter is exceptionally good, and

A DEER
GIVES YOU A CHANCE, BUT
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many people go to Albania for that alone. But as there were four of us, and, being all of a sociable turn of mind, we preferred a sport that is not so dangerous to practise in company, the duck came in for more of our attention.

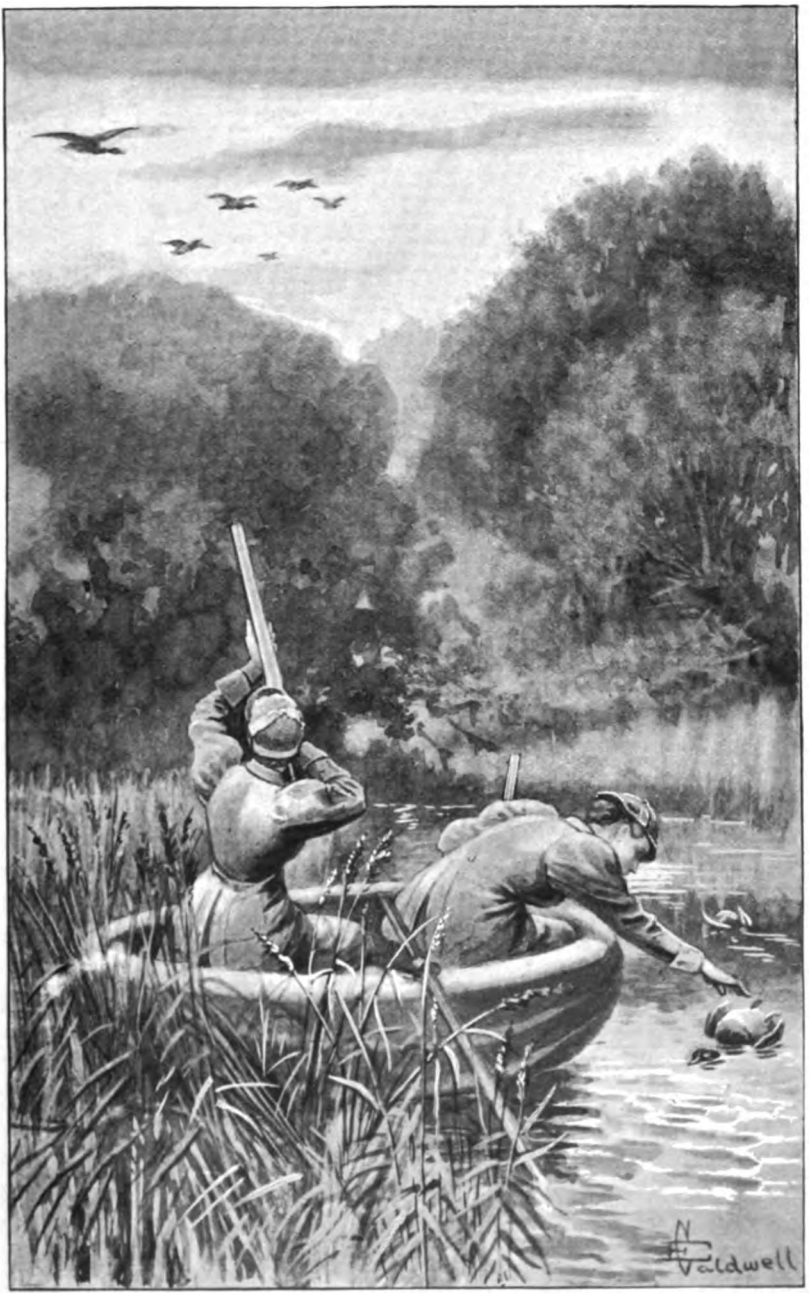
Our mankind would go in front with the big gun, my sister and I in a certain little air-tight boat, which, having a flat bottom, and consequently drawing no water, was invaluable for dragging over the marsh from creek to creek. But what a little wretch of a boat that was to manage! Picture two people in an ordinary-sized tub with two guns, huge cartridge-bag, waterproofs and waders, with two sculls that could not be used as sculls, for the boat turned right round if you left one oar a half second longer in the water than the other. Also, owing to the inflated sides, you could not have rowlocks, so you had to run the oars through strings, which were always breaking at the most critical moments. The guns also would always insist on aiming bolt at one's head if left to themselves for a minute, and as birds kept coming over every other second, it was necessary to keep them both loaded, if not at full cock, which was tempting. Our favourite haunt in this aforesaid 'death-trap' was a narrow little stream at Butrinto, which, after dragging the boat over about two hundred yards of marsh, became quite deep. Being the tributary of the big river the current was very strong, and kept swirling one under the willows and brambles which flourish in luxuriant confusion on its banks.

It was more than one woman could do to work both sculls under such conditions, without rowlocks, and with the current and the brambles narrowing so in places as to almost bar the passage. Imagine, therefore, the struggle, every time the birds came whizzing over our heads, to fling down our scull, seize our guns, cock them, and fire before we got whirled under the trees and torn to pieces by the thorns.

Then, of course, retrieving was the most difficult task of all, for a dog in that boat would have just made 'the last drop in the bucket,' so to speak.

Sometimes we would shove the boat ruthlessly through the brambles at the imminent risk of puncturing it with a thorn, which would result in its becoming rapidly limp and thin, and then sinking gracefully to the bottom. Once we did hear the dread sound of escaping air, and were both looking wildly round for a trusty and stalwart willow on which to seek refuge until we were rescued, when suddenly the noise stopped again and we resumed our journey. What was the cause of it we never found out.

Oh, the agony of seeing a great fat duck whirled away before our eyes! I must say the chase more often ended in one of us plunging into the water and struggling madly through mud and



IT WAS REAL GOOD SPORT

brambles until one could lay firm hold of the retreating prey, then to return dripping and discomforted to one's companion, whose skirts necessarily got the chief benefit of the drenching.

I dread to think of the expenditure of powder and shot on these occasions, for the birds are very plentiful, and keep flighting over singly or in bunches (chiefly teal and duck) in the most tantalising manner, as they take but a short second to flash past the opening where one can see them. We had to put up with considerable jeering when we returned with our small bag of ten or a dozen, after a bombardment like unto nothing less than the storming of Sebastopol.

However, it was real good sport, and we enjoyed it as much as anything, although we returned in such a dead-beat condition as hardly to be able to drag our weary limbs up the companion ladder.

The 'flighting' is very good on Butrinto or Levitatza marsh in rough weather, but on fine nights birds fly so high as to be safely out of shot. And what a beautiful panorama it makes with the sun setting in the west and the moon appearing almost dazzlingly silver over the black mountain peaks! As one sits alone on the great solitary marsh listening to the deep rumbling of approaching thunder, and watching those brilliant shafts of lightning which seem to flash down from Paradise to spy on a wondering earth, all one's poor little cares, worries, and ambitions seem to shrivel up and leave one again a child of nature or an untrammelled spirit.

But one is often rudely awakened to the real condition of discomfort and incompatibility with the elements of Nature by finding that those great clouds which were so beautiful in theory are anything but beautiful in practice, and are now sending cool streams down one's neck more conducive to rheumatism than rhapsodising!

With the storm came the ducks. We had some fine shooting at the little black specks as they came whirring over in quick succession, only the difficulty is to pick them up, as they are most difficult to mark down and find in the dark and blinding rain; even a dog is of no use.

The victualling department in Albania would delight the heart of a *gourmet*. Our menu included whitebait, red or grey mullet, snipe, woodcock, duck, pigeon--the little pigs were quite eatable, and we were never out of venison during the whole shooting season. We found it the best plan to buy a whole sheep from the Albanians, as the meat on Corfu is bad; but turkeys are very cheap there and good.

Corfu is a bad harbour, and it is not advisable to spend a night there unless it is very fine—that is to say, if you object to rolling about. In fact, it is very much the same as Cowes, and you get about the same amount of motion.

The climate seems different on the Albanian coast, even though it is only twelve miles or so across; many people find Corfu relaxing, while Albania is exactly the opposite.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

Two correspondents have lately written to ask me for some details of record bags of grouse, pheasants, and partridges. As regards pheasants I have no knowledge, and indeed the answer would not be of any interest or importance, because the size of the bag, as I need hardly remark, depends upon readily controllable circumstances. By various means a man might easily contrive to get his coverts full of 'stuff,' and if weak young birds early in October came fluttering out close to the muzzles of guns held by ruthless shooters bent only on making a record if possible, the performance would assuredly not be worth chronicling. Pheasant shooting is very much what owners or lessees of woods and plantations choose and can afford to make it. As to grouse, I believe that Lord Walsingham's total made in 1888 at Blubberhouses Moor has never been approached by a single gun. He killed and gathered 1,070; a marvellous total indeed; and, moreover, he had only himself to beat, having killed 842 birds sixteen years previously. In that same year—1872—Sir F. Milbank killed 728. I believe that Mr. Rimington-Wilson's shoot at Broomhead in 1893 is the record for a party. There were nine guns, and the bag was 2,648—that is, a fraction over 294 each—and so a little better than the 2,234 which once fell to eight guns—279 each. Of

partridges, so far as I know, the Maharajah Dhuleep Singh's bag at Elvedon, made early in September 1876, has never been equalled. He killed 780.

The other day I heard that the introduction of roedeer into Essex had proved a complete success, and, as it chanced, I have since had from my friend, Mr. J. E. Harting, of the Linnean Society, a most interesting description of the method in which he succeeded in the extremely difficult business of conveying a number of these deer from Dorsetshire to their present home. To obtain from a friend in the latter county permission to capture and transport eight or ten wild roe from their long-time abode to the spot where it was decided to turn them down was a simple matter; but how was one to snare without injuring several of these wary and timorous little creatures? When, on a certain morning, Mr. Harting turned up in Dorsetshire with a deer-cart, that was to be loaded presently with roe, he became the object of a good deal of chaff. Was he going to lasso them in the woods, where the lasso would not work—in addition to the difficulty of getting near enough to throw it—or had he an artful scheme for putting salt on their tails? he was asked. He had chosen neither of the methods, he modestly replied, and begged his hilarious critics to give him a little chance to succeed before they grew sarcastic about his failures.

Mr. Harting had, by careful observation, discovered the 'runs' by which the roe left one of their favourite woods, and at the places where the slot showed that they were accustomed to pass out into adjoining fields on their way to neighbouring coverts he fixed high nets attached to long poles. A number of beaters were then instructed to enter on the side opposite to these nets, and to make their way across, very quietly, indeed as noiselessly as possible—for if the deer were suddenly alarmed they would, in all probability, break out to left and right, but if just suspicious, or aware, of the approach of possible enemies, they might be expected to creep gently forward. When within a comparatively short distance of the side of the wood where the run had been noted, the beaters, at a given signal, were to make a noise, so as to terrify the deer, who would then, their artful captor imagined,

dash off at top speed and entangle themselves in the nets. All this came off precisely as planned, and the result of the drive was the taking of eleven deer. Three were let loose, as it was thought that eight would suffice. These were, one by one, freed from the nets, lifted on to a keeper's shoulder, and so landed in the cart, the interior of which had been carefully prepared for their reception with a thick flooring of hay. Satirical observers had no more to say about the use of lassoes or pinches of salt. The cart was put on a truck and taken to Waterloo. Mr. Harting hired the horse out of a four-wheeled cab, drove to Liverpool Street, and in a very few hours from the time when these deer were roaming free and unconstrained about Dorsetshire they were established in the county of calves.

In writing about Lord Suffolk's suggestion that two-mile flat races should be run for in the winter by horses that are usually found competing under Jockey Club rules, I observed that it seemed impossible to find an objection to the proposal. John Porter, however, has found several. The Kingsclere trainer fears the overworked horses will catch cold while travelling; break down on the heavy ground at home or on the courses where they run; he is afraid that trainers will break down likewise, under the strain of new work and anxiety; that jockeys deprived of their winter rest will be knocked up before ever the real racing season begins, together with other dark forebodings. Porter is surely alarming himself quite unnecessarily. It is not proposed to drag Persimmons, Shaddocks, Labradors, Canterbury Pilgrims, and others out of their stables and send them about the country in search of 200*l.* prizes. I do not suppose the adoption of Lord Suffolk's proposal will affect six per cent. of flat-race horses that are not now, and have not been for years past, brought out to jump hurdles in the off season. Porter does not seem to recollect that it is no new thing for good-class horses, or, at any rate, for winners of notable races, to run in hurdle races. Dan Dancer and Billow had done so before they won the Ascot Stakes, and so had Prudhomme before he won the Chester Cup. Instances might be multiplied. These and others did not break down or die of pulmonary diseases; their trainers lived to tell the tale. As a matter of fact a considerable proportion of trainers have the care of jumpers, and not only survive, but prosper; and Porter need scarcely be alarmed at the sad prospect of broken-down flat-

race jockeys, because it is not suggested that flat-race jockeys shall ride in the three or four races of the new description that will take place weekly.

One of the best, and best known, sportsmen of the last generation where shooting is concerned, kindly writes me this interesting letter: 'It is possible that you may hold the opinion that all which can be said about shooting has been said; but as the editor of a sporting magazine I should fancy not. Perhaps, therefore, I may make it the subject for a few remarks you might even think it worth while to publish. Your magazine has from time to time contained more or less able contributions on shooting, in the present and the past. I may, I hope, venture to have an opinion or two about this. I am not exactly "recent" myself, as may be gathered from the fact that I remember a day at Didlington with Wilson, George Hanbury, and Sutton, then the Norfolk cracks, and a morning at the Red House, Battersea, with Huntingfield and Crawfurd at 40 yards rise and ten bores; that I saw the match at 50 double rises between the former and Capps (Gannon) for 1,000*l.*, and heard the betting of 3 to 1 on the gun at both—which was justified by the scores of each, the loser killing 92. These events take us pretty far back into the past, and I am inclined to think that the shooting in these cases has never been beaten, either in the field or over the trap.

'Of my own deeds with a gun I do not wish to say more than this, that I never in my pigeon-shooting days (which were not long) lost an important money match, the record performance being a total of 21 kills to two misses, at 40 yards rise, against a then well-known Russian shot, and Sir F. Sykes, 24 birds (the last unshot) for 500 louis, a great deal of money depending on the event; and I may perhaps mention, a good many years after, as a veteran, winning the cups of the Lords and Commons' match three years in succession without a miss. In modern times I have seen some good shooting by English and foreign shots, but as the gun is now held to the shoulder no comparison can be made. Among these, however, I consider that one only can be classed as extraordinary, viz. the Frenchman, Lafont, who killed 34 birds in succession at 30 metres in a heavy money match against Walter

Blake, and something like 90 out of the 100 in the rest of the match. This man was probably the finest pigeon shot who ever lived, and held his gun fairly enough. My own experience over the trap did not extend beyond a few years, and it is certainly of shooting in the field that I prefer to write.

'Of the flint-gun period and the pointer I am unable to speak, although I have seen the first by the coverside, and hunted the long stubbles with dogs of this sort—before stubbles disappeared, and the turnip took its place as cover. My first gun was a Joe Manton (converted) nevertheless. Those were the days when we walked, and *could walk*, which does not seem as common a case as it was. Into the great Norfolk turnip fields the birds were *walked* by the *gunners themselves*, usually off the manor corn lands. At first the roots were usually sown broadcast, but soon the drill superseded this. In Suffolk, if the number of birds was smaller, the variety of shooting was much greater, owing to the fine extent of heath and the red-leg partridge, at that time almost as numerous as the grey bird. Nothing, I think, could be finer than a walk with two other guns over one of these moors fringed with corn land, as on Rushmere or Rendlesham. That this shooting is far more difficult I have always been convinced, for I have never seen more than half a dozen men who could take their doubles at long rises in the form necessary to make a bag in November in wind on a wild heath. To this, uncertainty of footing, arm-weariness and fatigue contribute, as well as bad light for the low shots if the day is dark. The necessity of holding the gun in a position to *meet* the rise required some strength.

'For this shooting the detonators were good enough, and four birds would often be got out of a covey. In a match at Six Mile Bottom against Captain Alexander I once got twelve birds out of three lots; but these coveys crossed the line of fire. The bags made were not so large as are now recorded, and 100 to 120 brace was considered good work for three or four guns; though I have known 200 brace thus bagged, and on several occasions I got between 60 and 70 brace myself when in line with other guns. Of these 69½ was the best, on November 21, 1860, 165 brace being

the total bag to four guns. The Lafoncheux breechloader began to make its appearance about this date; but it was heavy and did not shoot up to its weight. The gun also shot low, the bolts at the breech being weak. By the coverside, however, they were found good enough, and improvements very soon brought them into general use. Partridge driving had begun nearly ten years before the advent of the breechloader, principally in Suffolk, and mainly because some of us were growing older, and found the red-leg partridge almost impossible to get at by walking. At first we stood close under the hedge and shot the bird after it had passed, but on the heath it was found much easier to take the forward shot first. Once established it very soon became a recognised form of sport; and although the Norfolk cracks would have none of it, and the fogies shook their heads, it came and conquered from the lighthouse at Dovercourt to Cromer Point. At first it was considered very difficult, and confined to a very few, as a really high art; but as it really required nothing but practice, a few years sufficed to bring into line a great number of men who, although not very quick, would miss no great number of those they shot at.

'As an accomplishment in the art of gunnery, I do not rate it very high myself, for from firm footing and a stationary platform only practice is required to hit an object of this sort even with the rifle, as was shown by the performances of Dr. Carver and Miss Annette. In game shooting the usual fault of inferior shots is waiting too long on the first bird, which should be snapped at 30 yards off or on sight. They then turn round, the true focus of the eye is thus lost, and with it the chance of the double. Another fault is firing at the same bird twice—after a miss—which should never be done, for it causes uncertainty in respect of the second barrel, and a momentary delay to see the effect of the first shot. A man who gets into these habits will never reach even second class in form, or do what he ought to fill the bag. I have heard it objected that to scramble down the greatest number of birds in the shortest time is not the highest class of shooting; nor perhaps is it. It is like the spot at billiards, and apt to be accompanied by a similar loss of power all round if practised too much; but it is the fashion of the day, and the best shot will be the man who can get down the most behind a hedge or a butt. In old times the time required for loading placed

limits to this, and some greater care was necessary not to waste a shot; nor was it desirable to press your loader too much, which led to mistakes. I remember a new man I had, when charged with having put in no shot, saying, "Yes, sir, yes; I thought you were in a hurry," a hint I never afterwards forgot. The breech-loader has ended all this, and the man who can get it off oftenest is probably the most effective driving shot.'

Several inquiries have reached me as to whether any more papers on 'Old Sporting Prints,' by Mr. Hedley Peek, are to be published. I had hoped to include one in the present number, but it was not quite ready; next month, however, the series will be continued.

THE

BADMINTON MAGAZINE

March 1897

MR. POULTON'S PUTTER

BY ANTHONY C. DEANE

I

NOWADAYS, when golf has become an essentially democratic and modern rather than a royal and ancient amusement, it seems rather rash to claim absolute supremacy in any one branch of it for any single player. Without prejudice, then, to others, whose performances I have had no opportunity of witnessing, I will only say that, as far as my own experience goes, Mr. Henry Poulton has the right to be considered the very worst golfer in the world. Not that he is by any means a beginner; in that case there were still hope for him. No; for many years has he plodded painfully round the links without bettering his game in the least, and yet with unfailing and quite astonishing good-humour. To rally any ordinary player upon his performance when he has just made his seventh ineffectual attempt to extricate his ball from a bunker would be (unless you carried a revolver in your pocket) the height of imprudence, but Poulton, to his infinite credit, is as tickled by his own achievements as are any of his numerous friends.

Like many other golfers nearly as indifferent as himself, Poulton spends a small fortune on 'fancy' clubs. His locker in our Sandibeach club-house is filled with an extraordinary collection

of 'Patent Lofting Cleeks,' 'Self-Aiming Drivers,' and other monstrosities which none, except a few persons like Poulton, ever dream of buying. Needless tc say, he has found so far all these devices to be vain; none the less eagerly, however, is he continually buying fresh ones, in the hope that he will at last find his ideal, a weapon which will bring his score for the round below 150, which must be about its present average.

HE PLODDED PAINFULLY ROUND THE LINKS

One fine afternoon last autumn, General Warburton, the president of our club, and myself were strolling round the Sandibeach links. On the following day the annual competition for the club challenge cup was to take place, and the General was anxious to see that the greens were in good order for that event, while I was not playing in order to keep fresh for the great contest. A good many others, however, had not thought it

necessary to imitate this precaution, and we had to walk warily in order to avoid being driven into. Presently, indeed, a ball whistled dangerously near my companion's head, and he turned sharply round—in time, happily, to discover that the offender was a lady before the emphatic remark that was on his lips found utterance. The culprit, however, had the grace to apologise.

'I really didn't see you,' she explained; 'I was paying such attention to Captain Onslow's instructions to keep my eye on the ball. But he will tell you that I really am improving.'

Her companion did his duty nobly. 'Certainly,' he said, 'Miss Duke is getting on splendidly. She'd give old Poulton odds already.'

'Oh,' cried Miss Duke to the General and myself, '*have* you seen Mr. Poulton this afternoon? He's really too funny for words! He's all by himself, as usual, and of course no one would like to be seen playing with a man who makes himself as ridiculous as that!'

Now this remark of Miss Cecily Duke's was distinctly unkind. Poor old Poulton had fallen head-over-heels in love with her some months before, and she had, up to a certain point, shown every symptom of returning his affection. But in an evil moment he had induced her to take up golf, whereupon, having discovered that his performances on the links were the standing jest of the club, she ruthlessly forsook his company for that of Captain Onslow, a very fair player, but, in my humble judgment, a conceited prig. General Warburton, who was perfectly conversant with these facts, and who is, moreover, in the habit of speaking his mind, replied:

'Well, I don't know about that. If he can't play much, he's always cheerful, even when he's badly treated by fortune. You might have a worse partner than Poulton, Miss Duke, for golf—or any other purpose.'

The young lady opened her eyes at this remark, while Onslow scowled, and so the pair of them went on their way. I ventured to observe to the General that his hint had been a trifle broad.

'Nonsense, sir,' he retorted; 'I'd have put it a dashed sight more strongly if Onslow hadn't been with her. The way that girl's treating Poulton is outrageous—outrageous, sir. Mark my words——'

But the General's weighty words were cut short at this moment; for, arriving at the edge of a sand-pit, we found Poulton himself at the bottom of it, painfully digging away with his niblick.

'Hullo,' I cried, 'how's the Automatic Niblick getting on to-day?'

Poulton stopped in the middle of his stroke, smiled at us placidly through his gold spectacles, and mopped his heated brow with his handkerchief.

'Not very well,' he said, 'but I've got a putter of my own invention, which I'm keeping for the competition to-morrow, and it's the finest thing ever made.'

'Humph!' said the General, 'glad to hear it. Did you see Miss Duke just now, by the way?'

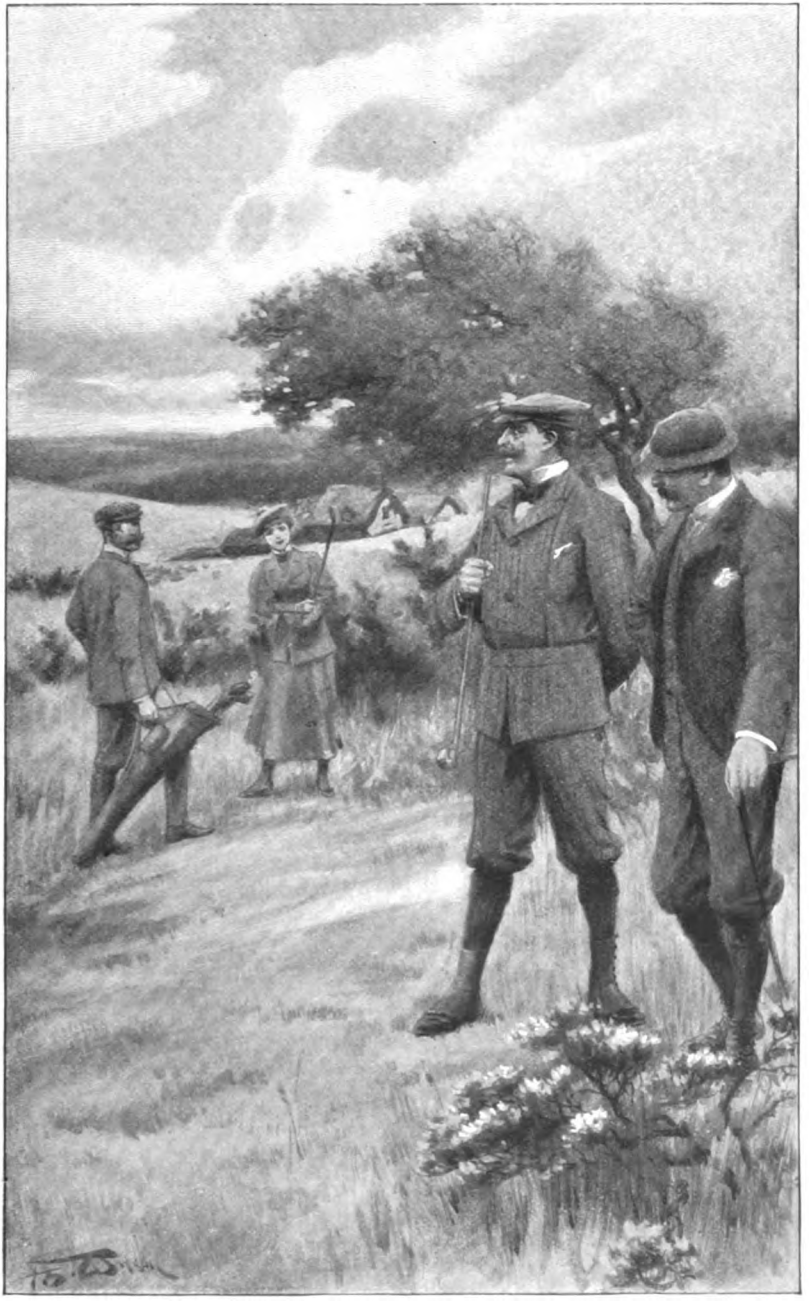
Poulton's face fell. 'Yes,' he admitted, 'and she and that idiot Onslow tried to be funny about my play. They wanted to know whether I was going to win the cup to-morrow, and so on. I told them that, with the help of my new putter, I had a very fair chance, whereupon Onslow guffawed, and Miss Duke said that she'd take lessons from me if I could do that. But let me tell you about my putter. I've been working at it for a long time, and it's made of——'

'Oh yes, exactly so,' interrupted General Warburton. 'Now, look here, Poulton, why the dickens don't you give up that foolery? Hang it, man, you've got a handicap of thirty, and if you only played along steadily, why, you might do a decent round and get on terms with Miss Duke in the bargain.'

'Much obliged,' said Poulton, flushing, 'but my new club isn't —er, foolery. And if Miss Duke prefers Onslow's society to mine, there's nothing more to be said.'

The General is not accustomed to be snubbed in this way, and was about to deliver a vigorous retort, but I seized him by the arm and led him homewards. He unbottled the vials of his wrath to me as we went.

''Pon my soul it's monstrous—yes, monstrous. Here's a nice girl, and a pretty girl, whom a man that adores her and has plenty of money wants to marry. Then, if you please, she throws him over just because he cuts a ridiculous figure on the golf-links! Goodness knows what these young women are coming to nowadays. But it's his fault, too—he's only got to keep clear of the links for a month, and they'd make it up in no time. Or if he'd give up his confounded patent clubs, and play decently, why, he might win a monthly medal or something, and then she'd take him like a shot. They're a pair of idiots—a blighted pair of idiots, I tell you. And if that fellow Onslow wins the cup to-morrow, I suppose, in her present golf craze, she'll accept him on the spot!'



A Ball whistled dangerously near my Companion's Head

II

On the following morning about a dozen of us met on the links to do battle for the challenge cup. The field might easily have been larger, but a good many gentlemen refused to play on the plea that the handicap allotted to them by the committee was ludicrously small, though it may be hinted that their real motive was a laudable desire not to waste half-a-crown needlessly. In a small club, such as ours at Sandibeach is, the 'form' of each player is so accurately known that it is not difficult to name some half-dozen players, one of whom, even under handicap rules, is pretty certain to be returned as the winner of every competition. So, as has been said, the number of entries for the cup was not large; they amounted, to be precise, to exactly thirteen, among those who made up this ill-omened total being the dauntless Mr. Poulton.

Besides the players, however, a large number of non-combatants, including a fair sprinkling of ladies, graced the links on this occasion, and quite a little crowd stood outside the club house, by the home-green, laughing and talking with much cheerfulness. Captain Onslow was amongst them, and he was again the escort of Miss Duke, to whom he was explaining the superlative merit of the special make of ball which he favoured. There, too, was Mr. Beaumont, a local solicitor, who was supposed to be Onslow's most dangerous rival for the Cup, and who insisted upon telling me a long story of how a dastardly club-maker had ruined his pet driver by repairing it in a disgracefully clumsy fashion.

The other players were, of course, also talking 'shop,' exchanging clubs, waggling them in the air with a look of superhuman wisdom, and vehemently abusing the committee and the professional for the disgraceful state of the putting-greens. Now and then they were interrupted by the audacious chaff of the young ladies in the crowd, and sometimes, even worse, were called upon to explain the game to one of those jocose persons who, when the explanation has been given, perpetrate the usual perennial jokes about it, and make the long-suffering golfer a murderer at heart.

Presently a diversion was caused by the arrival of Poulton upon the scene, smiling radiantly through his gold spectacles, and carrying a weird-looking instrument in his hand.

His approach was greeted with cries of 'Good-morning, champion!' 'Here comes the winner!' and the like, amid which Poulton only smiled more good-humouredly than ever.

I ventured to ask him what on earth the implement was which he was carrying.

'Oh,' said Poulton, 'that's my new putter, which I was telling you about yesterday. It's my own invention, and the best thing of the kind ever made.'

There was a roar of laughter at this, and everyone crowded round to inspect the strange-looking thing, upon the merits of which its inventor proceeded to lecture.

'It must often have struck you how far more accurately one can direct a ball with a billiard-cue than with any golf-club. Well, I have combined here the advantages of an ordinary club, a croquet-mallet, and a billiard-cue. The shaft, you observe, is of the usual kind. The back part of the head is made of lead, and is shaped like a mallet. Then I've fastened on to the face of this two inches of the top or cue, with cork-tip complete.'

There was more laughter at this, and General Warburton expressed a derisive hope that Poulton hadn't forgotten the chalk.

'Of course not,' he replied simply, and produced a piece from his pocket, amidst fresh jeers from the onlookers.

'It's all very well for you to laugh,' he said tranquilly, chalking the tip of his absurd implement as he spoke; 'of course there's always prejudice against a new invention.'

His air of quiet conviction almost shook our incredulity.

'Wonder if the old duffer has blundered on a good idea?' said Mr. Beaumont, in a rather audible aside. 'Here, Poulton,' he continued, 'may we try your patent? Or is it too precious to be trusted to our hands?'

'Of course not,' replied the inventor, 'try it by all means. You'll find it a perfect marvel!'

So indeed we did, but scarcely in the way meant by its deviser. We were standing within a few feet of the eighteenth hole, and one after another of us essayed a 'putt' at it with Poulton's club. Unless the ball was struck exactly in the centre by the narrow tip, it went off in the most unexpected way to square-leg or cover-point. Even when properly struck, instead of running smoothly along the ground, it jumped in the air, and hardly travelled any distance. Poulton, however, insisted that the fault lay with ourselves, but when everyone else had tried his weapon with most unsatisfactory results, he obstinately refused to exhibit its powers himself.

'No,' he said, 'I couldn't do it justice with so many people

looking on. But you chaps will acknowledge before long that there's more in it than you fancy.'

'Never saw such a crack-brained invention in my life,' remarked General Warburton. 'If you're going to use it to-day, Poulton, you ought to be starting your round, else you won't be back before it's dark!'

Soon afterwards the first couple drove off, and Poulton and his putter passed from our minds. As the other twelve players had sorted themselves into pairs earlier in the day for the purposes of the round, there was no partner available for Poulton; but the President, General Warburton, gallantly con-

ONE AFTER ANOTHER OF US ESSAYED A 'PUTT'

sented to accompany him in order to keep his score, in compliance with the rather necessary rule which forbids a single player to make his own estimate of the number of his strokes.

And so we started on our rounds. My own fortune is not of any particular concern to the reader, so I will content myself with saying that the same execrable ill-luck which, strangely enough, invariably attends me upon medal days, did not desert me on the present occasion, and that, before we reached the final hole, my scoring card had been torn up and scattered to the winds. My companion, on the contrary, had the most extraordinary good fortune, although he was quite unwilling to acknow-

ledge it, or that his score was not a brilliant one simply on account of his extremely bad play.

Somewhere between the eighth and ninth holes we overtook Poulton, who, as usual, was delving with his niblick in a bunker, while General Warburton stood patiently on the edge and counted the strokes. He had just said 'Eleven' as we came up.

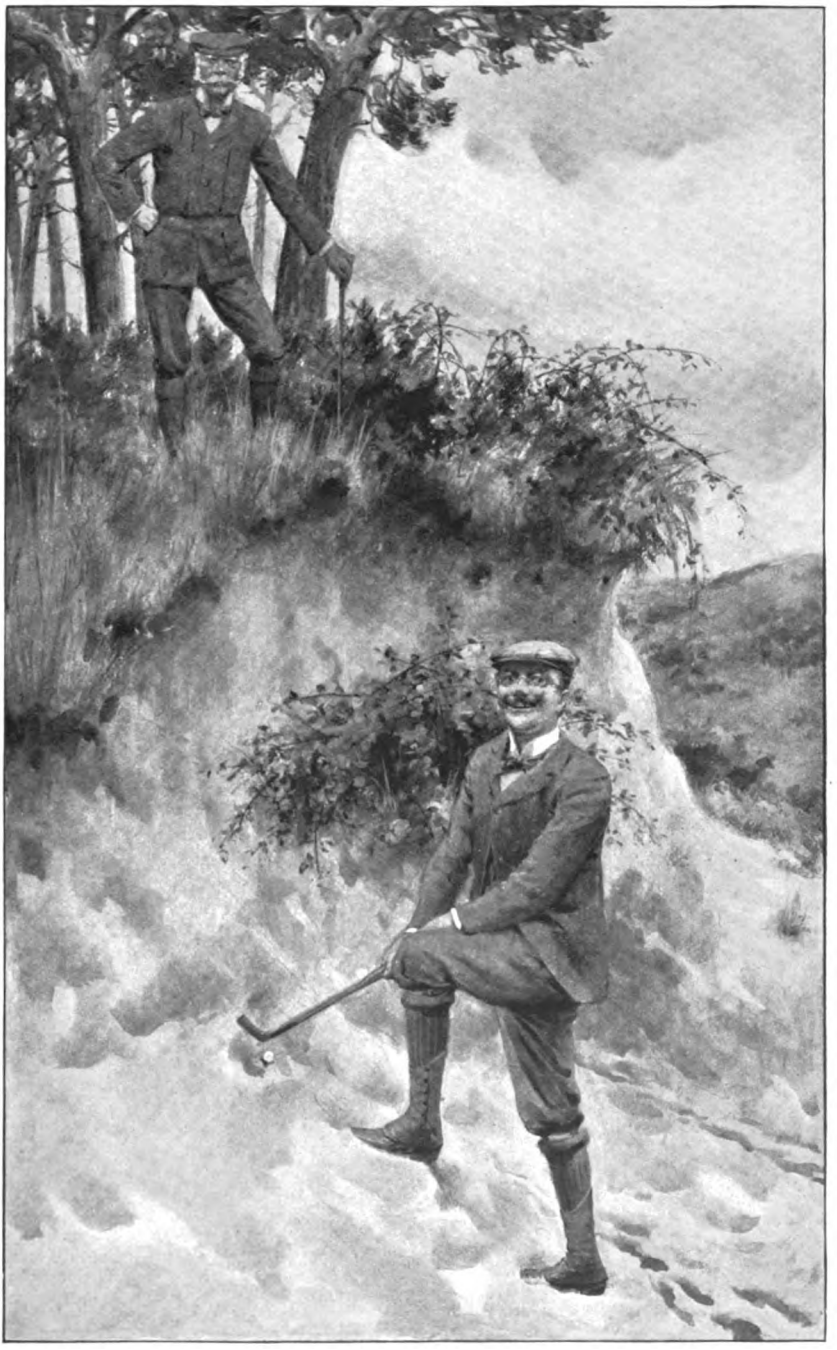
'You never saw such an exhibition in your life!' he said irritably to us; 'there, that's twelve, and he took ten to the last hole! Including, of course, five on the green, thanks to that precious putter of his. And he insists on finishing the round, though he hasn't got the remotest chance of being anywhere but last on the list. Thirteen, and he's deeper in the sand than ever!'

Poulton himself, however, smiled quite happily at us as we passed on. He hadn't got quite accustomed to the new putter yet, he told us, but he was confident of doing the last holes better.

By the time another hour had passed we had all, with the exception of Poulton, completed our rounds, and were assembled in the club-house comparing our scores. An examination of the cards proved that Onslow had done the round in 82 and Beaumont in 83; but as the handicap of the former was only 3, while that of the latter was 4, it appeared that they tied for the Cup with the net score of 79. This, however, was hotly disputed by Onslow. In the case of equality of net scores, he maintained, the prize was always awarded to the maker of the best actual score, and therefore he had defeated Beaumont by one stroke. That gentleman, on the other hand, stoutly denied this; the competition was under handicap rules; under handicap rules the result was a tie, and another round must therefore be played by Onslow and himself to decide the destination of the Cup. Eager partisans on each side joined in the argument, and the dispute began to grow rather heated, when the door opened, and General Warburton appeared, accompanied by Poulton, who seemed as cheerful as ever. The President was at once surrounded by a crowd of excited golfers, each endeavouring at the same time to explain the question under discussion from his own point of view. When the bewildered General had managed to elicit the facts, he declined to deliver an immediate judgment upon them.

'I rather fancy that Onslow's right,' he said, 'but I must refer the matter to a committee meeting.'

'That,' said a quiet voice, 'is quite unnecessary.'



POULTON SMILED QUITE CHEERFULLY AT US

We turned round in astonishment, to discover that the speaker was no other than Poulton.

'You see,' he answered placidly, 'that the point is of no importance, because neither Onslow nor Beaumont has won; in fact, I myself am the winner.'

Some of us laughed at this as a rather far-fetched joke, others stared at Poulton as if they feared for his sanity. The General, however, turned upon him quite angrily.

'What on earth do you mean, sir? Here's your precious score which I kept for you—162 less 30, total 132. If you mean to doubt my accuracy——'

'Not at all, my dear General,' said Poulton soothingly. 'My net score is, as you say, 132. But then, if you will kindly take the trouble to read Rule 3 of the regulations for Medal Days, you will see that every other player to-day has disqualified himself.'

General Warburton took the copy of the club rules from Poulton and read aloud the rule indicated:

'"3. On the morning of the Medal Day new holes will be made, and any member playing at them before he competes will be disqualified."'

'Thank you,' said Poulton. 'May I ask whether there is any player to-day, except myself, who did not putt before the competition at the eighteenth hole with my new putter?'

There was a moment of stupefied silence, and then, as the situation dawned upon us, a roar of laughter, in which only Onslow and Beaumont did not join.

'This is perfectly preposterous!' said the former angrily. 'You surely can't mean to listen to such nonsense, General? In any case the plea is a purely technical one, and ought to be overruled.'

'You didn't mind trying to make out that you'd beaten *me* on "a purely technical plea,"' observed Beaumont with some bitterness.

'I didn't ask your opinion, Mr. Beaumont,' returned Onslow hotly. 'What I wish to know is whether the General means to award the cup on this frivolous pretext to—to such a perfect fool of a player?'

'I'm really very sorry,' said the President, looking at him apologetically; 'but Mr. Poulton is clearly right in his contention, and I have no option but to declare him the winner of the Cup!'

The victor did not pause to enjoy the chorus of congratulations

showered upon him, but, seizing his prize, rushed triumphantly with it towards the town, and, needless to say, in the direction of Miss Cecily Duke's home. Her astonishment could scarcely have been less than was ours, and I don't know whether Poulton explained to her the stratagem which had furnished him with the victory. At any rate, his appearance in the novel *rôle* of the successful golfer gained him the wish of his heart, and the news of the engagement was formally published on the following day.

And if you doubt the accuracy of this story, you have but to consult the annals of the Sandibeach Golf Club, in which you will find it duly recorded that the Challenge Cup for 1896 was won by Mr. Poulton, with the astonishing net score of 132.

THE FUTURE OF FOX-HUNTING

BY C. E. A. L. RUMBOLD

WHAT is to be the future of fox-hunting is a question which must often cross the mind of every fox-hunter, more especially after a day's sport when wire has been continually met with and few foxes have been found.

It is often stated by excellent authorities that hunting as we know it now cannot last more than another thirty years. Let us consider, therefore, what are the causes that would bring about its downfall and what remedies can be employed to mitigate what to lovers of the chase is so sad a prospect.

The first and most essential thing for the future welfare of the sport is to have in every country a good supply of foxes; but we are constantly hearing of their scarcity in many districts. The primary cause of this, no doubt, is the agricultural depression, which has caused many landlords either to sell their estates or to let their shooting. The old landlord might not have been a hunting man himself, but, to say the least of it, he always tolerated fox-hunting, and recognised it as one of the essentials of a country life. The new landlord or shooting tenant in a very great many cases buys or rents an estate when he has reached middle life. He has never been accustomed to riding, and therefore hunting is out of the question. As a rule, he takes to shooting, rears a large quantity of game, and, being a business man, likes to get as much out of his sport as possible; to which

end he regards as enemies all those who tend to lessen the amount of game he sells. Foxes, therefore, grow scarce on the estate, and in consequence a letter comes from the M.F.H. begging him not to destroy them. Seeing a certain amount of justice in the M.F.H.'s remarks, and perhaps also actuated by a desire to get into county society, he gives his keepers orders to preserve foxes, which they invariably disobey, being for the most part hereditary enemies of the race of Reynard, and thinking—no

FOXES GROW SCARCE ON THE ESTATE

doubt with a certain amount of truth—that the more game they rear the better will they be able to get another and perhaps superior situation; but, at the same time, they will tell our new-made landlord that there are plenty of foxes, and show him game which they say has been destroyed by them, although as likely as not it has been killed by vermin. The shooting tenant, not being a sportsman 'to the manner born,' in the innocence of his heart believes his servants, his views being strengthened by seeing an odd fox running about during a big drive. This class of

would-be sportsman is, unfortunately, greatly on the increase in the home counties, where there is every sign that he will eventually exterminate foxes and, consequently, fox-hunting.

Legally, of course, he is perfectly within his rights; but surely disputes between fox-hunters and shooters should not be argued from a strictly legal point of view; rather they should be governed by 'the unwritten law of sport,' which should be binding on all sportsmen.

If hounds are kept out of a great portion of the principal covers in a country till Christmas, and are not allowed to cub-hunt in them nor run through them, it is not worth while keeping a pack of fox-hounds, and consequently fox-hunting must eventually go to the wall in those counties where many of this class of shooting tenant live.

Now let us consider the subject of barbed wire, and how that will affect the future of the sport. Agricultural depression is again largely responsible for the increase of the fatal strand. Many of our good friends the tenant-farmers, who are after all the backbone of fox-hunting, are no longer able to come out with the hounds, so they can scarcely be expected to take so keen an interest in the sport as they once did. Most of them can ill afford to have their fences broken and their crops damaged, and they naturally enough fence with the cheapest material obtainable, which is undoubtedly wire. When there is much wire in a country it destroys all the pleasure of hunting, not only because of the great danger it is to both men and horses, but also by reason of the inconvenience of having to stop and cut it or else go round; in fact, men will soon cease to ride across a district in which wire is known to exist in any quantity.

In connection with wire a peculiar incident occurred to the writer of this article. Hounds were running hard across some small grass fields, when a low flight of posts and rails were encountered, with a strand of barbed wire on the far side of the fence. The horses of the two men in front of me cleared the lot, but my hunter's forelegs unfortunately caught the strand. Instead of having a nasty fall, as I should have anticipated, by miraculous luck the wire, like the walls of Jericho, fell flat down, and I was enabled to go on uninjured. A subsequent investigation showed that the bottom of the posts that supported the wire was rotten, consequently the weight of the horse brought the whole thing to the ground. But such luck is not common.

The wire question is in a great measure a question of money and organisation; for in those counties where there are many

rich men who subscribe liberally to the wire fund under the leadership of a popular M.F.H. the future of the sport will not be greatly affected. The plan which seems to answer best is to divide the country into so many districts, and to appoint in each a man well known and popular among the farmers, who shall request the occupiers of the land to let him take down the wire at the expense of the Hunt at the beginning of each season, guaranteeing on behalf of the Hunt to replace it when hounds have ceased to meet. An obvious objection to this course, when dealing with a certain class of tenant, is that paying a man so much money to take down his wire is simply placing a premium

UNFORTUNATELY CAUGHT THE STRAND

on his putting it up, and really amounts to paying for the right of riding across the land.

Money also plays a prominent part in the preservation of foxes, because not only can covers and shootings be rented by the Hunt, but also a big poultry fund helps to popularise the sport, and greatly prevents the destruction of foxes. In the different countries which constitute the shires many hundreds of pounds are collected and distributed annually to pay for the poultry killed by foxes; but, in reality, it is utterly impossible for foxes to kill anything like the amount of poultry that is paid for. It generally happens thus: Smith goes to inspect his fowl-house

in the morning, having forgotten to shut it up the night before. Finding a few dead ones lying about, and others missing, he at once puts it down to foxes, and, not wishing to be a loser by his own carelessness, writes a letter to the M.F.H., whom he considers fair game for this sort of thing, asking to be remunerated. Having received compensation, he goes in the evening to the village inn, where he proceeds to spend his ill-gotten gains, telling his friends Jones and Robinson of his success. Jones and Robinson do not see why Smith should get money from the Hunt while they get none, so on the first possible opportunity that presents itself they write to the M.F.H., with a similar result to that achieved by Smith; and in this way a great deal of the money is spent. Of course, it all tends to popularise hunting, and therefore to the preservation of foxes. But is not distributing money in this way in reality paying for the right of riding over the land?

Let us now consider what the Legislature is likely to do for or against us. Man-traps and spring-guns were years ago made illegal for the purpose of keeping off trespassers, being considered against the principles of humanity. Is not barbed wire hidden in a fence which is put up for the purpose of keeping off hunting men much more brutal? Unfortunately, it would be difficult to prove that wire was put up to endanger the lives of the followers of hounds, as it is recognised as a legitimate fence unless it borders on a public highway. Consequently, help from the Legislature can hardly be expected. On the other hand, an Act is never likely to be passed to suppress hunting – not even stag-hunting; for, if the spoil-sport party brought in a Bill for that purpose, it would almost necessarily have to include amusements which are recognised as sports of the people, and so would meet with scant encouragement on either side of the House.

There is another cause which has and will affect the sport, *i.e.* the increase of population; but this is hardly likely to make itself greatly felt for many generations to come.

When we come to consider the whole question of hunting, we must marvel that it has lasted so long, and that it is still likely to last for many years longer. In what other country than Great Britain are men allowed to ride practically where they like across the land in pursuit of the fox? Eight hundred years ago, when hunting was begun in this country by the Normans, they could go where they liked, paying little heed to the tillers of the soil, who, if they had dared to expostulate, would have had a pretty strong hint from the thong of a riding-whip to hold their tongues.

Now everything is altered. Each man over whose land we ride is perfectly within his rights if he turns us off; and surely it speaks volumes on behalf of the tenant-farmers of England that hunting is still a flourishing institution.

It is often asked why we do not have such long runs as those which were enjoyed by our grandfathers. The answer to the question is easily found: it is the spread of a higher civilisation. Railways in particular have much to answer for. Not only do

THE CAUSE OF MUCH ANNOYANCE TO THE HUNTSMAN

they drive away foxes from those covers through which they run, and are often the means of heading them, but also into many countries, especially those situated in the Midlands, they bring every day a very large and undesirable collection of people, a great many of whom do not send a fair subscription to the Hunt, and are the cause of much annoyance to the Huntsman, as well as doing great damage to the crops and fences of the farmers.

Again, the present system of high farming is utterly against

scent, and was practically unknown in the days of our forefathers, consisting as it does of the use of artificial manures and various systems of draining the land. Everything that is artificial is against the sport. An ideal hunting country would essentially be a primitive country, where railways were unknown, and where keepers would be at a discount; for, as a matter of fact, foxes don't want preserving—they only want letting alone. What

NOTHING TO SPOIL SPORT UNLESS——

glorious sport we could have if we could be suddenly transplanted into the less wooded parts of prehistoric England during the hunting season! For we should have genuine wild foxes to hunt, and virgin grass to gallop over; no wire, no railway—nothing to spoil sport, unless some of 'Punch's' prehistoric animals turned up, which, according to Mr. E. T. Reed, they generally did when least expected or wanted.

To sum up the future of the sport generally, we may expect

to see it driven further and further away from the big manufacturing towns, especially from London, where the *nouveau riche* shooting tenant and the increasing population will play a prominent part in its downfall; but here, probably, stag-hunting and the drag will largely take its place. At the same time, in the shires the sheer weight of money will keep the sport going for many generations; whilst in counties, such as Lincolnshire, situated some distance from London, districts thinly populated, where the farmers occupy many hundreds of acres each and are comparatively rich, their co-operation alone will keep the sport on its legs.

The better the state of agriculture in a county the better will be the chances of maintaining the sport, as the old landlords will still be able to remain, and the farmers, being themselves able to hunt, will naturally take a keener interest in perpetuating hunting.

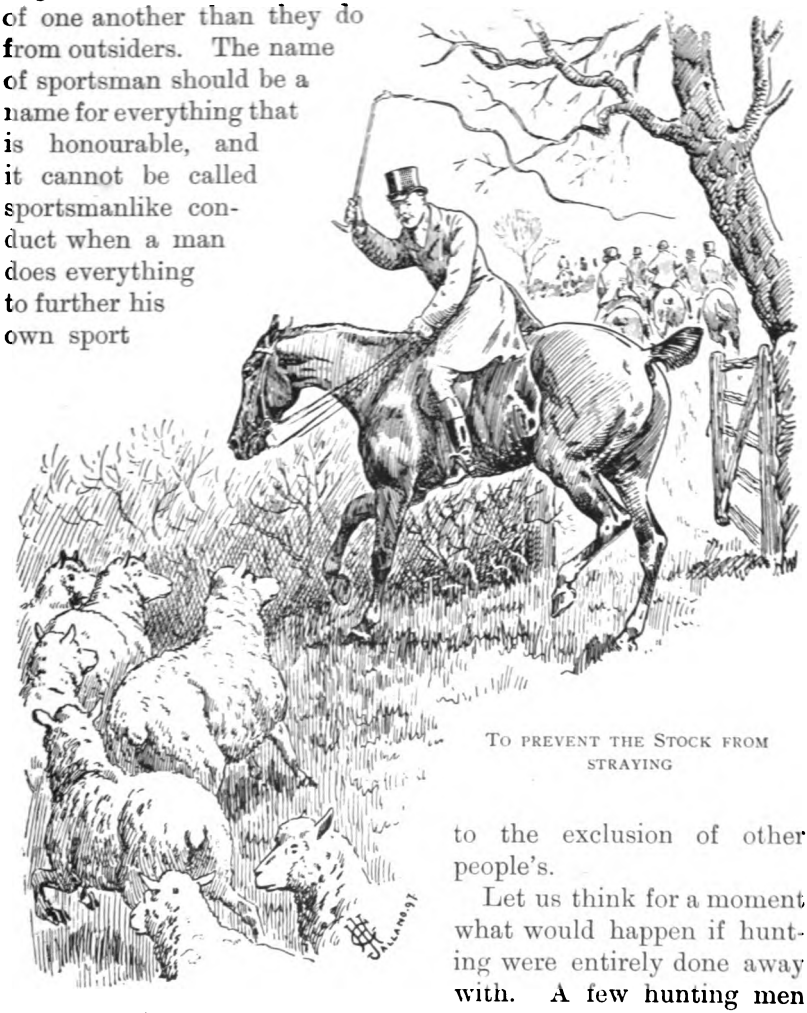
So close is the tie which binds hunting to agriculture that the latter cannot be depressed without that depression being felt by the former. No doubt in the course of years in the overcrowded counties of the Midlands a great deal of the land hunted over will have to be rented in the same manner as shootings are at the present time, although this will be entirely opposed to the spirit and principle on which hunting has been carried on in the past.

It is in the power of every hunting man to strengthen the future of the sport by subscribing liberally not only to the Hunt itself, but also to the poultry and wire funds, which help to create good feeling between fox-hunters and farmers. Every sportsman should bear in mind when he is riding across country that the farmers, by permitting his presence, are conferring a benefit on him, and not he on the farmers; therefore, he should endeavour to do as little damage to their fences as possible, and try as much as he can to prevent their stock from straying. In this way he will greatly assist the Master in his onerous duties.

Everything should be done to popularise the sport as much as possible by Hunt Horse-shows and by meeting near towns on holiday days; for no good sportsman would grudge the inhabitants a sight of hounds once or twice in a season, even if they did by too much enthusiasm help to spoil sport. Another way of making hunting popular is by supporting local tradesmen and farmers whenever opportunity arises.

Shooters as well as fox-hunters have their enemies, there being a Socialistic element in England at the present day that

would like to see both sports abolished. Let brother sportsmen, therefore, band together for a common cause, and let them in dealing one with another show toleration and discretion. In this way they will assure the future of both sports. Surely sportsmen ought to receive better treatment and less opposition at the hands of one another than they do from outsiders. The name of sportsman should be a name for everything that is honourable, and it cannot be called sportsmanlike conduct when a man does everything to further his own sport



TO PREVENT THE STOCK FROM STRAYING

to the exclusion of other people's.

Let us think for a moment what would happen if hunting were entirely done away with. A few hunting men might possibly take to some other amusements in England during the winter; but by far the larger number of those who could afford it would not stop for the cold months in this climate of ours; they would go abroad, a great many no doubt taking to the agreeable amusement of yachting, and the Mediterranean would reap a rich harvest in consequence. The effect of all this would be that

millions of pounds that are now spent in the country and town alike for the maintenance of hunting boxes, horses, hounds, &c. would find their way into the pocket of the enterprising foreigner. Such a result, combined with motor cars, would make the horse an interesting relic of the past. Would not this be the last straw that would break the back of the long-suffering farmer? For, what with his horse trade gone, his oats unsaleable, and no local demand for his eggs and milk, would he not indeed be in a sorry plight?

In Ireland, I believe, hunting is carried on under happier auspices than in England, the population being much smaller, and the country well adapted for 'the sport of kings.' Wire is also practically unknown, and perhaps for this reason Ireland is destined to become the happy hunting ground of the future.

THE HOMING PIGEON

BY W. BANCROFT

THE history of the homing pigeon in this country is soon told. During the early part of the present century the bird, known under various names such as antwerps, skinnums, long-faced beards, and horsemen, was used extensively as a messenger by the commercial houses and for newspaper work. We read in 1862 of the pigeon express bearing the news of the winner, or, as it happened in that case, the non-winner of the Goodwood Cup. All these terms were subsequently merged in the designation 'carriers,' and it was not until quite recently that the term homing pigeon was generally adopted. The designation is most happy, as it conjoins the 'coming' qualities of the bird with its well-known love for home. Carrier pigeons must not be confused with homing pigeons. The former is a fancy pigeon, especially prized for the largeness of its eye, and wattles, but quite useless as a messenger. Both are cousins of the dragon; but the fancier, in the case of the carrier, has bred purely for points, colour, shape, &c., while the homing-pigeon fancier cares nothing for these things. With him it has been 'handsome is as handsome does,' and stamina with intelligence has been his aim. An article in 'Bell's Life' of January 1, 1870, speaks of the 'commercial aspect' of the homing pigeon, and from it I extract the following:—'Baron Rothschild, before electricity was brought into operation, had an immense quantity of pigeons for express work. And a splendid lot they were: of various colours,

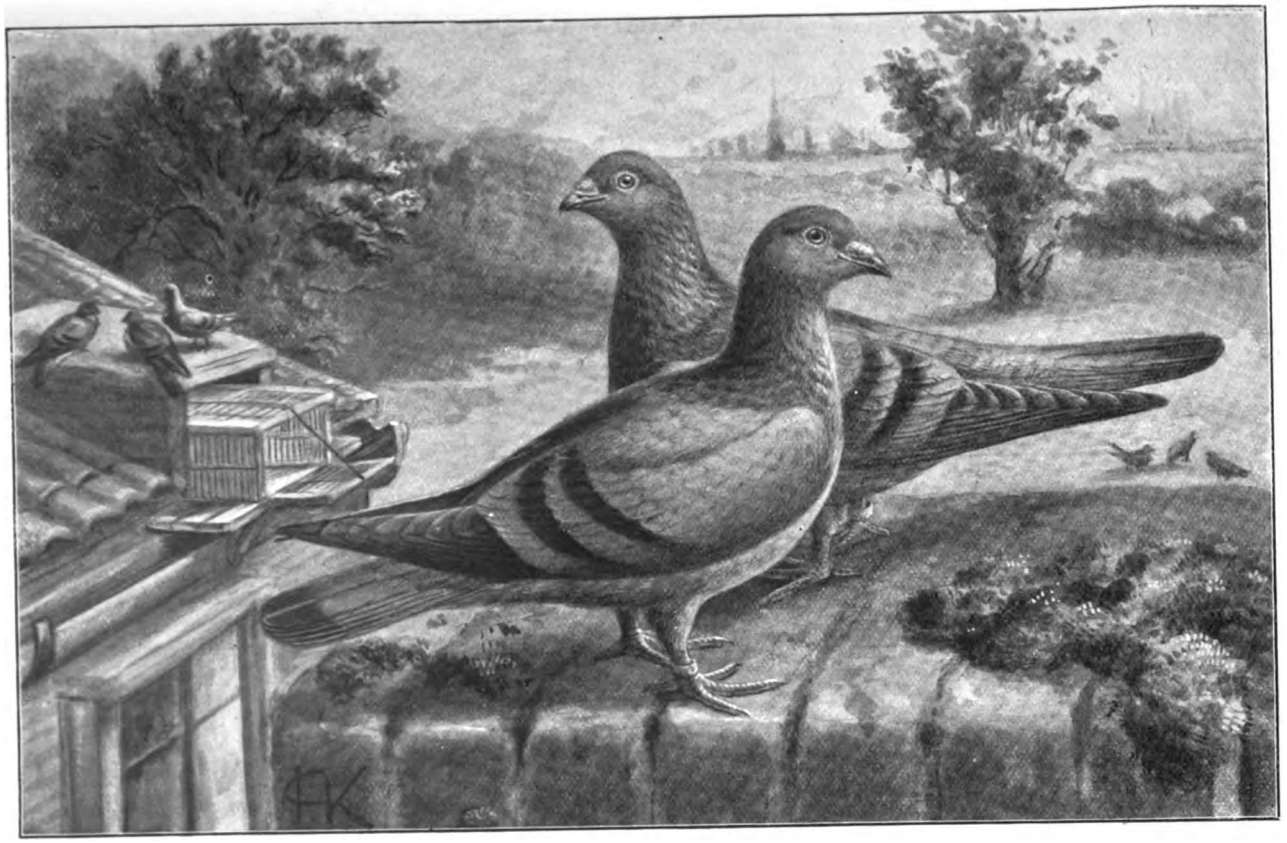
including mealies, blues, reds, blue pieds, &c. These birds brought the news of the state of the money markets in Paris, and frequently the Baron cleared in England, almost immediately after the news arrived, many thousand pounds by buying or selling stock. These birds did not come direct from the Continent, for there were relays throughout the distance, and the birds that were housed at Dover brought the news from Calais, when it was despatched by another pigeon, whose home was at Sittingbourne, so on from there to Blackheath, and thence by another bird to the metropolis.'

It has been generally stated, and so far without contradiction, that it was by means of their pigeon express the Rothschilds learned the result of the Battle of Waterloo several hours before the Government of the day, and, profiting by this means, were enabled to make their first great *coup* on the Stock Exchange.

In the pre-telegraph days, as instanced above, the pigeon must have been of the greatest value commercially, and was often the only means of rapid communication between towns situated, say, some forty or fifty miles apart. In the early days we do not hear of long journeys being made. The best seem to have been from twenty-five to fifty miles, but later on several of the large manufacturers had pigeons with a reputation of being 'first-class London birds,' capable of coming from London to Lancashire. With the era of the telegraph these 'commercial lofts' were dispersed, but it is interesting to note that some of the best racers of to-day are descendants of the birds which brought the earliest news of the ebb and flow of the markets.

About this time began the importation of birds from Belgium, and with that dawned the era of long-distance racing in this country. It is curious to note that although the best birds in this country to-day are of direct Belgian descent, all the recognised Belgian and French writers, in endeavouring to arrive at the origin of the modern racing pigeon, quarter the English dragon upon its pedigree.

To a great degree no doubt these conclusions are correct, and it may be safely stated that the dragon has given strength of wing, and the tumbler height of flight, while the homing instinct goes back to the fountain-head of all the varieties, the blue rock itself. The bird, in fact, has been made, and is the product purely of that game of extermination known as 'the survival of the fittest.' The one thing which gave the great fillip to the sport was undoubtedly the Siege of Paris. The French had fought and lost one great battle after another till they were



ANTWERPS

driven within the iron walls of Paris. Then it was that the city, entirely surrounded by the allied forces, found herself cut off from all communications with the outer world; a few patriotic fanciers offered their birds to the Government, and so was organised the pigeon post, by which means the Government were kept alive to the doings of the besiegers, and the besieged could receive communications from their friends outside. The *modus operandi* was this: a balloon left Paris taking with it a pannier of pigeons, and, once clear of the Prussian outposts, the balloonist made his way for some recognised centre such as Tours. The messages to be sent to Paris were then, by means of photography, reduced down, so that a page of the 'Times' could appear on a small piece of paper or film two inches by an inch or so. In this way a single pigeon was the bearer of upwards of three hundred messages, the aggregate cost of which to the senders was considerably over 100*l.* The first three pigeons carried in this way over a thousand despatches. Upwards of a hundred and fifteen thousand official and private messages were brought into Paris by the pigeons, and the records of the pigeon and balloon service of the Siege of Paris certainly read more like a romance of the Jules Verne type than simple historical facts. The services rendered during the memorable siege set all the world a-wondering, with the result that nearly all the Governments of Europe (our own being the great exception) at once established military lofts, which have been extended on every hand, and are being perfected to the present time.

While the Governments thus recognised the value of the homing pigeon for military purposes, a few stalwart fanciers in this country discovered a new medium of sport, with the result that Mr. J. W. Logan, M.P., and other recognised 'Fathers of the Fancy,' imported the best birds that Belgium had to offer; and it is from these birds, and those imported since, that the racing pigeon in this country has been produced. I have little hesitation in saying that upwards of 20,000*l.* per annum has been spent during the last twenty-five years in purchasing the best birds, and that at prices from, say, 20*s.* for a squeaker, up to 60*l.* for a proved racer or stud bird. The first public long-distance races in this country seem to have been organised about 1870, and from that day to the present the homing pigeon has been gradually clearing its character of being a public-house plaything, fit only for mile to three-mile sweeps, until now towns innumerable and villages throughout the country have their flying clubs, with a programme of races starting generally at about seventy, and

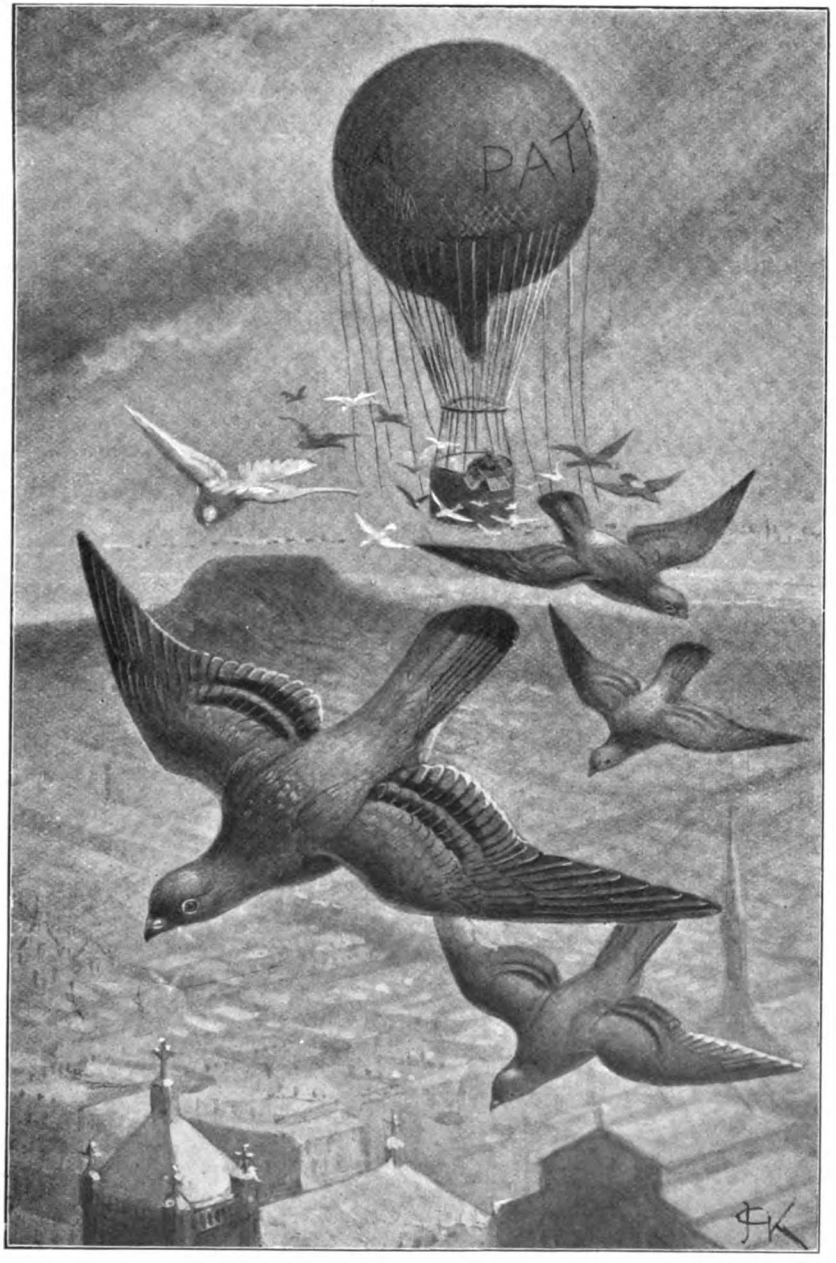
extending in many instances up to five hundred miles. Wherever, too, the 'Britisher' has gone, there also has he taken his terrier and homing pigeon, and we now hear of the bird as a recognised institution in America, India, South Africa, and Australia. So rapidly has the sport extended in the last few years that it would seem the next fifty may see the racing of homing pigeons recognised as the world's great sport.

It may be safely computed that during the past year 10,000 birds at least competing in races have been liberated at Ventnor, Bournemouth, and other places in the South of England, to fly into Lancashire, Cheshire, and Yorkshire. Of these probably 5,000 would later on cross the Channel, *en route* for either Cherbourg or Jersey, and of these quite 1,000 would finally be panniered for La Rochelle to fly distances varying from 500 to 550 miles.

So unwieldy has the 'fancy' of late become, that in its own protection the rules of a proposed 'Union' have been drafted, and probably before 1897 has gone by we shall see it with a species of 'Jockey Club' at the supreme head of affairs.

The great ambition of the Northern fancier is to fly 500 miles in the day. This, up to the present, has not been accomplished, although birds have been home well before breakfast the morning after liberation, having flown upwards of 550 miles. The performance can, however, readily be done on a favourable day, and many fanciers in and about London accomplished the route from Thurso, N.B., in July last, the winning bird flying 501 miles, with an average velocity of 1,454 yards per minute for the entire distance. These 500-mile performances in the day are quite common in Belgium, and the distance has also been covered in America.

A moment's consideration will, however, show that for a bird to fly 500 miles in, say, fourteen hours of daylight he must cover nearly thirty-six miles per hour for the entire journey, and this cannot be done unless the weather and wind are favourable for the whole distance. A day of this character does not occur more than four or five times in the season, and up to the present it has not been the good luck of the Northern fancier to drop on one of these days for a La Rochelle race. The writer on two occasions could have accomplished the distance in the day with birds home from Nantes, 424 miles, one at 12.45 P.M., and also with a bird on another occasion home at 4.15 P.M. Taking the latter, supposing the bird to have been liberated at La Rochelle, it would have had only some eighty



PIGEON MESSENGERS AT THE SIEGE OF PARIS

miles further to fly, and four good hours of daylight to do it in. The latter of these performances was undoubtedly the better, as the journey was started with a light south wind and finished against a head wind; while in the former case the bird was simply blown home, with three or four other birds timed in just before it, and dozens of others close on its tail.

It will be seen what an important factor the direction of the wind is in pigeon-flying. With a strong tail wind birds have accomplished more than sixty miles in the hour; but where the stamina comes in, and the race is a race, is when the bird has to force every inch of its way against a head wind, often accompanied by sleet and driving rain. Then it is that blood and condition tell a tale.

You may search the whole annals of athletic performances or feats of strength, and, as far as it is possible to contrast two distinct things, the homing pigeon will go one better than the best of them. Take this as an everyday example. Birds are liberated at, say, Ventnor, to fly 200 miles into the north of England, and the wind is blowing at the rate of upwards of a mile a minute dead against them; and yet dozens of the birds will be in their lofts under 400 minutes. The day may be cold, and a sleet storm or two may have to be encountered, but the result will be the same. If the day is such that the birds cannot see their way but have to feel it, and the wind bloweth from the quarter that is neither good for man nor beast, then comes 'the winter of our discontent;' we shall find the winning bird's velocity reduced to about 700 yards per minute, and have a bare 5 per cent. of the liberated birds home the same day. These are the races to be won, and these are 'the good 'uns to breed from,' and to perpetuate the wonderful pluck and stamina of the homing pigeon.

Take another example, which is also unique, and shows that the homing instinct is innate to the pigeon itself, and not made by the fancier. In giving it I will sketch the life of a homing pigeon. We will suppose pigeons were hatched on March 1 last; in July they would be put on the road, starting at a three-mile stage, which would be increased to 6, 12, 24, and, say, 54 miles by degrees. They would then be ready for the first race —Worcester, 74 miles—on the first Saturday in August. The following Saturday they would go to Cheltenham, 90 miles; the next Saturday Swindon, 124 miles; and on the last Saturday of August they would go to Bournemouth, 180 miles. Swindon has always been considered far enough for youngsters, but in 1895

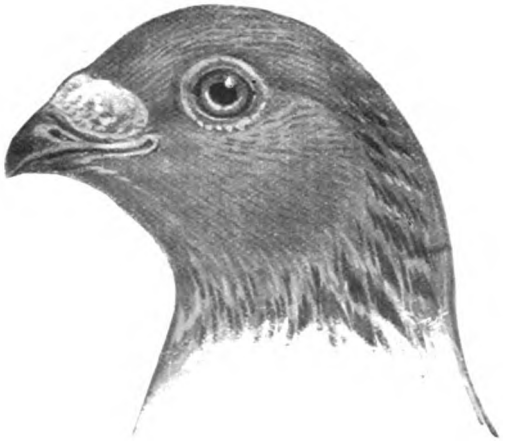
and 1896 races were flown, and successfully, from Bournemouth, many of the birds covering 200 miles. Not a bad performance for babies, many of them under twenty weeks old!

These birds would then retire to their winter quarters, to be put on the road again the following April, and would probably fly each of the above places again, when, according to the strain they came of, they may either be kept back or sent on across the Channel. Many a good Yorkshire and Lancashire fancier, with the birds hatched in March of the previous year, has flown to Rennes in the day (over 400 miles) in July of the following year. Personally I consider this is forcing matters too far. I should prefer keeping the yearlings back at Cherbourg, and then giving them as far as the club goes in the third season. The best long-distance work will be got out of a bird in its third, fourth, and fifth seasons. There are many birds in the north of England that have crossed the Channel from seven to ten times, but the Belgians can show a great number that have competed in races from 500 to 650 miles quite as many times. It must be remembered, however, that the Belgians, flying from Dax, Bordeaux, and St. Jean de Luz, compete under much more favourable conditions than the Lancashire fancier flying from La Rochelle, who has the English Channel and the black country of the Midlands to cross, and to run the gauntlet of a far greater number of 'sportsmen,' who heed not what they shoot or kill for the miserable sixpence the dead pigeon is worth at the poulterer's shop.

It is interesting to record the various routes which have been flown by the leading clubs during the past season. The birds of Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Cheshire had generally a south-west line into France, either by way of Cherbourg or Jersey, and so on to La Rochelle, with Rennes for the intermediate toss. Last year the Liverpool Club adopted the south-eastern route *vid* Dover, St. Omer, and Paris. Several of the London clubs and also the Central Counties struck out due north by way of Leeds, Newcastle, Banff, and Thurso. One London club had for its last race Tralee, on the south-west of Ireland, while a Scotch Federation also struck out for the land of Erin. A South of England club last season went due east, finishing at Brussels. The above will show that all the points of the compass have been attempted, but experience proves that southerly and northerly are the two most favourable routes for the birds.

In conclusion, I would say that pigeon-racing, like cycling, was in the first instance the pastime of the masses, and the

enthusiasm for both has gradually spread upwards until the highest in the land have become devotees. The sporting instinct is the grand leveller, and admiration for pluck, skill, and stamina is the common property of mankind. It is innate, like the homing faculty of the pigeon handed down from sire to son, but by a freak of Nature intensified in special cases.



HEAD OF SHORT-FACED ANTWERP

THE RULES OF BILLIARDS

BY A. H. BOYD

IT seems somewhat curious that, although the leading writers on the subject of billiards are agreed that a careful revision of the present rules is urgently required, no practical step has as yet been taken to bring that revision about.

In order that the readers of this Magazine may understand clearly how things stand at present, it will be necessary to explain briefly how the existing rules came into being, to point out why they need to be amended, and to show how far the question has been ventilated.

As most billiard players are aware, an Association with the comprehensive title of 'The Billiard Association of Great Britain and Ireland, India, and the Colonies,' with a president, 'an unlimited number' of vice-presidents, and a large committee was formed in the year 1885 with the laudable object (*inter alia*) of establishing a code of rules to govern the different games played upon billiard tables.

To effect this, a committee of twelve of the leading professional billiard players of the day, appointed by the Association, set to work, and shortly afterwards issued the now well-known 'Association Rules.' Thus at the present day billiards occupies a unique position amongst English games of skill; for it is the only game played by amateurs in which the rules are compiled by professional players.

The result of this state of affairs has not been altogether

satisfactory, and the reason is fairly obvious. The players appointed on the committee, who were all men of high position in the billiard world, all men of vast experience on every point connected with the game—in short, the best men *at* the game—were from the nature of things unaccustomed to codification and draughtsmanship, and it is no discredit to them that their code, which bears ample evidence of infinite trouble and honest work, is, when viewed in comparison with, say, the Laws of Whist, inconsistent, unscientifically arranged, and very loosely worded.

Instead, it is a grave question whether any adequate improvement in the rules can be obtained until the constitution of the committee undergoes a change. Seeing that the framers of the rules were all men of wide practical experience, it is fair to assume that every question likely to arise in a big match must have been thought of and considered, so that alterations in the rules would be largely in the nature of arrangement and expression. In these two particulars there is room for very considerable improvement. Practical experience is, of course, a very important factor in rule-making, but it is not everything; in the matter of arrangement amateur assistance is urgently required, and trained draughtsmanship is absolutely essential to ensure an unequivocal code of rules.

More than thirty years ago the Laws of Whist were considered to be in as unsatisfactory a state as the Rules of Billiards, and the Arlington Club gallantly took the bull by the horns, resolved that a new code should be drawn up, and set to work forthwith. The Portland Club Whist Committee examined the new code and sent a list of suggestions, which were at once adopted by the Arlington Club Committee, and from that time to this, wherever the Union Jack flies and the game of whist is played, the code so drafted has been *the* recognised authority on the subject.

Why, then, is it that a similar effort cannot be made with regard to the Rules of Billiards? 'Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte.' Someone has to take the initiative and the thing is done.

Until, and unless, the leading clubs issue under their authority a new code of rules, the Rules of Billiards will never be, to the bulk of amateurs, what the Laws of Whist are to card players. Any amendment of the present rules by the present committee can only be a temporary measure. The time is fully ripe for a radical change; the hour has come, but the club, as yet, is not. There must be many clubs at this moment of sufficient standing in clubland, and with a sufficient number of leading amateur

authorities on the game, to start the scheme; once started, everything else will follow: the organisation will come as a matter of course, and there is little doubt that the experiment would 'catch on.'

Nothing, of course, is more difficult than to draw a satisfactory set of rules; nothing easier than to criticise (somehow) an existing set; but the writer hopes to be able to point out sufficient grounds for his belief that a revision is necessary, without the questionable assistance of ill-natured comment.

In order, then, to deal generally with the rules as they stand, it may be well to consider first what may be taken without controversy as constituting a satisfactory code; and, judging from what is laid down by Major Broadfoot in the Badminton volume on Billiards, it will probably be admitted that the rules should, if possible, be so arranged: (*a*) that each rule, or group of rules, should follow naturally upon the one preceding, so that there should be no turning backwards and forwards; (*b*) that each group should be exhaustive—that is to say, that *all* points arising out of that particular branch of the subject should be dealt with and clearly provided for; (*c*) that the wording should follow a uniform system, so that if, say, a 'losing hazard' is the proper term for the act of the striker's ball going into a pocket after striking another ball, that term and *no other* should be used throughout; (*d*) that each rule should be, as far as is possible, self-explanatory.

Omitting for the present all controversial matter, or questions of principle, let us see how far the Association Rules are wanting in such arrangement as that suggested above.

Rule 1 very properly defines winning and losing hazards, cannons, coups, and misses. Unfortunately, however, the definitions of hazards are no sooner made than they are practically abandoned; for, on turning to Rules 7 to 15, which are properly explanatory of, and should immediately follow, Rule 1, we find in Rules 7, 8, 9 a 'losing hazard' is expressed by the words 'pocketing the striker's ball off' another; in Rule 10 the expression 'losing hazard' appears again, while in Rules 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, the framers of the rules revert to the expression 'pocketing the striker's ball.' In none of the above rules does the expression 'winning hazard' appear, and we only find it once in the code—viz. in Rule 43.

No mention of the table is made in Rule 1, and anyone who desires to gather what appears in the rules upon the dimensions of the table will find the position of the spots given in Rule 4;

the position of the baulk-line and the size of the 'half-circle' (commonly known as the D) in Rule 46, although baulk is mentioned in Rules 3, 5, 29, 33, 34, 42. No measurements are given anywhere for the table itself, nor for the pockets, nor for the size of the balls. Rule 5 is a particularly striking instance of faulty arrangement and loose wording. It runs, as far as is material, 'Whoever breaks the balls must play out of baulk from the half-circle.' As already shown, baulk is not defined, the half-circle is not mentioned until Rule 46, and 'breaking the balls' is nowhere defined. Before leaving this rule it may be remarked that there is nothing in the rules to show that a striker, after making a losing hazard, must play his next stroke from the 'half-circle;' of course it is common knowledge, but it ought to appear.

Turning next to the very important subject of fouls and their penalties, we shall find that the grouping is unsatisfactory, and that the leading rule is not exhaustive. Rule 30 runs as follows:—

'Foul strokes are made thus: by touching any ball; by in any way impeding or accelerating the progress of any ball; by playing with a wrong ball (for penalty see Rule 25); and by lifting both feet from the ground whilst making a stroke.'

A careless student of the rules might well be excused for thinking that a rule so clearly expressed and so apparently exhaustive would embrace every kind of foul which could occur in the game; but readers of this article will hardly be surprised to learn that Rules 25, 27, 28, and 34 provide for different kinds of fouls not mentioned in Rule 30. See, too, 'how the fates their gifts allot.' If a player inadvertently plays with the wrong ball, and is unfortunate enough to be detected before he plays another shot, his opponent has the option of no fewer than four penalties (Rule 25). If, however, he plays while the red is off the table (Rule 27), or while the balls are still rolling (Rule 28)—which, on the face of it, appear to be more heinous crimes—the opponent has no option at all, but 'must break the balls.'

It is worth while also to compare Rules 25 and 34.

In Rule 25 one of the four penalties for a stroke which is declared to be a foul by Rule 30 is 'to compel the *adversary*' (who, we may notice, is called the *opponent* everywhere else in the rules) 'to play the stroke over again, and the same to be a foul.' In Rule 34, 'In the event of the player scoring after being ordered to play the stroke'—a foul—'over again, the score counts, and he continues his break.'

Can anything be more inconsistent than this?

It is clearly impossible within the limits of a short paper to examine every rule in the code, and the foregoing salient points have been treated at some length, not only because they are themselves highly important, but also because they are striking examples of that lack of arrangement so conspicuous throughout, and of the want of accurate expression so necessary in a satisfactory code.

The rules with regard to fouls are exceptionally faulty. Rule 30 contains too much or too little; the rules are not consecutively grouped, for rules bearing on other subjects are sandwiched in amongst them; and the penalties are unsystematic.

It will be necessary here to turn backwards a little, as several minor points require consideration.

Rule 6.—'The game shall be adjudged in favour of whoever;' this might be more judiciously worded.

Rules 18 and 19.—Here the cart is before the horse. Rule 18 deals with balls lodging on something which prevents their falling to the ground *after* they have been knocked off the table. Rule 19 refers to the act of knocking the balls off.

Rules 21 and 23 refer to a player moving and touching his ball (21 in the act of aiming; 23 in the act of striking), but in neither of them is any mention made of a cue, and it is left to conjecture or special knowledge to determine whether touching by the cue or by the body of the player is intended.

Rule 29.—If the player is *in hand*. This is a new expression, and it is only found here and in the touching rule (Rule 36). The expression is not defined in any way, and it should, of course, be included in the rule dealing with baulk.

A point which puzzles a good many amateurs arises out of Rule 33, which says: '. . . should the object ball be playable, that is, should its centre be out of baulk, the player can strike it on either side without his own ball necessarily going out of baulk.' Take the case here illustrated.

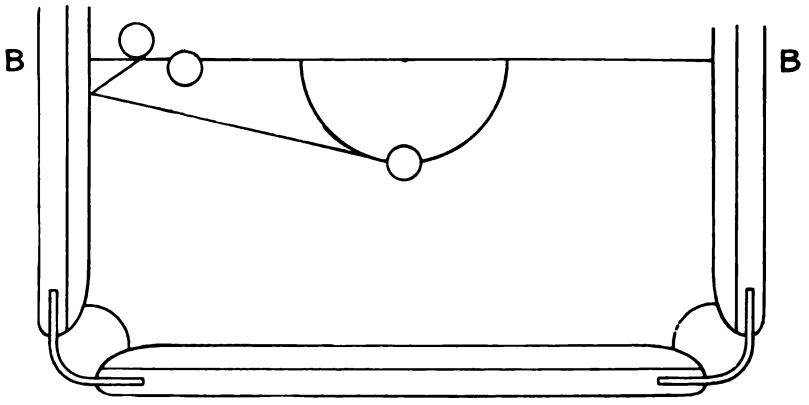
Is a player entitled to strike the side cushion *in baulk* before striking the balls? Of course he is; but many doubt it, and the question has been referred to arbitration more than once. It must be remembered that the Rules of Billiards do not apply to professional matches only, so that it would be well if this point were cleared up.

In Rule 35 we find the only mention of striking a ball more than once, but in that rule it refers to misses only. Why should this be? If 'impeding and accelerating the progress of a ball'

does not cover this, why insert the words 'in giving a miss?' Why not have a hard-and-fast rule for all strokes?

Rule 42 mentions the now obsolete 'quill' stroke and prohibits it, but no definition is given of the stroke. One is tempted to ask in childish fashion when is a 'quill' stroke not a 'quill' stroke? Clearly there must be some point at which the quill stroke merges into a legitimate stroke, and it must be a difficult matter for a referee to fix it on the spur of the moment.

Enough has now been written to show that the Association Rules do not follow naturally one upon the other; that even where rules are grouped they are not exhaustive; that the wording of similar rules varies arbitrarily; and that many of the rules are far from self-explanatory.



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Therefore it is fair to say that the time has fully come when a complete rearrangement is highly desirable, and ought to be undertaken.

Passing on from the urgent need for arrangement, it must be remembered that there are some controversial points, some questions of vital principle which may divide billiard players sharply into two camps, but which are bound to engage the attention of any body of men who may undertake the revision of the rules.

The more these questions are discussed by the general body of amateurs the more will those to whom the task of revision may fall be enabled to gather the drift of public opinion, and, perhaps, here and there a new suggestion may turn out worthy of consideration.

The push stroke: the uniform system of penalties: and the question of interference by a spectator have been very clearly and

exhaustively dealt with by Major Broadfoot in Chapter XII. of the Badminton volume on Billiards; and there can be little doubt that all that he has said thereon will be heartily endorsed by the leading players, and by the great bulk of the billiard-playing public.

With regard to the touching rule Major Broadfoot makes out an excellent case for abolishing the rule altogether—in other words, for allowing the player to proceed as if the balls were not touching. So excellent is his argument that it might be taken as convincing, were it not for an article which appeared in the 'Billiard Review' a short time ago, in which the writer said that he had tried the experiment, with the result that he had made 1,612 cannons in about twenty minutes. If this were commonly feasible, Major Broadfoot's case would fail entirely; but it is fair to assume that such extraordinary delicacy of touch combined with such phenomenally rapid execution is probably unique, and may perhaps for that reason be disregarded. If, however, the total abolition of the rule should not be considered prudent, an old suggestion (or was it an old rule?) to the effect that when the striker's ball touches another ball that ball must be moved might be revived and considered.

If the rule be retained as at present, it would be advisable to insert a clause stating that if the striker's ball should touch the red and the white be 'in hand,' the white is *not* to be spotted on the centre spot. This because many men, relying on the wording of the rule, seriously contend that they are entitled to spot the white in the case above mentioned.

A curious instance of the possible hardship of the present rule is given in Vol. I. No. 1 of the 'Billiard Review.' Game 100 up. B is 99. A (the striker), who is 95, makes a cannon, holes his opponent's ball, and leaves the cue ball touching the red *in baulk*; score 99 all. By the present rule he has no option but to spot the red and play from 'hand,' and thus his probability of winning the game is seriously jeopardised because he has succeeded only too well in his previous stroke.

With reference to the marker all the professionals and many amateurs seem to be agreed that he should not tell a player 'how far he is off.'

Major Broadfoot insists on the principle that the struggle should be strictly confined to the players, and adds that no sophistry can make it right that the judgment and eyesight of the marker should be at the disposal of an adversary who is too lazy or too blind to see for himself how far the cue tip is from the ball.

But may it not be argued in another way? If it is a sound principle that keen-sighted players are to have the advantage of their superior vision, and must not receive extraneous assistance, by analogy the umpire at cricket should be restrained from giving guard. The two things seem to be very much on the same footing—that of the convenience of the greater number.

Since the rule has come into force it is a common sight in ordinary rooms to see a player put the half butt and rest approximately in position and then walk to the other end of the table to see for himself the distance between the cue and the ball, with the result that time is wasted.

Anybody who takes the trouble to walk to the other end of the table can see for himself how far he is 'off,' just as a cricketer, by walking to the other wicket after putting his bat on the crease, could give himself guard; but, in the name of common sense, is it worth insisting on? The marker's information saves a walk, and thereby saves time.

If it is unanswerable that a player 'should profit by any advantage' that he may possess, and that the struggle should lie between the players, the logical deduction would be that each player ought to fetch the ball out of the pocket every time, in order that a strong-legged adversary should gain the advantage of his strength.

As a matter of fact, broad principles such as those laid down cannot be supported in their entirety, and if they are employed in a restricted sense their force in argument is materially impaired.

It has also been seriously argued that in a big money match a marker might purposely give a deceitful answer. Such a thing seems highly improbable, but, in any case, the remedy is simple: if a player feared that he might not get a truthful answer, he would scarcely be so foolish as to ask the question.

The question may or may not be important, but it is one upon which a very large number of amateur players take the view that the rule as it stands at present is vexatious. In fact, after an exhaustive trial, one well-known London club, at any rate, has abolished the rule, to the great satisfaction of most of those who play there.

About a year or two ago a correspondence was started in the 'Times' on the question of making the red and white hazards count the same (two or three, as the case may be); and the champions of the principle urged, very logically, that a white hazard was just as difficult as a red hazard, and that therefore

there was no apparent reason why one should score more than the other. They could not, however, agree amongst themselves as to what the hazard was to count: those who favoured two urged that scoring would be much simplified, as every score would be two, or a multiple thereof; those who preferred three declared that if the red were lowered to two the game would be unduly prolonged.

As this point is seriously entertained by a number of good players, it is worth while to examine it carefully, and see what the effect of the proposed alteration would be both in professional matches and in amateur games.

As to professionals, it is difficult to believe that it would affect their system of play to any great extent, especially if cannons and hazards were equalised in value; *but* (and it is a very large but) comparison between future and past breaks would be difficult, if not impossible. Unless those who urge the change can show a corresponding advantage, this is in itself sufficient to condemn the scheme as far as professionals are concerned, for the history of billiards hinges mainly upon breaks.

When we come to amateurs we find 'a horse of quite another colour.' The average amateur player knows nothing about nursery cannons, can make a half-ball losing hazard with tolerable accuracy, has a fair eye for a winning hazard, and troubles himself very little about 'playing for position.' To such a one the enhanced value of the white winner—for whether you level up the white or level down the red the white must be the gainer—would surely prove a tempting bait; in other words, the 'pot and double baulk' school would find their hands materially strengthened. The writer was at one time a member of a well-known club where billiards was much played, and where the average of skill was quite up to the ordinary club standard. In that establishment the foursome 100 up (of all dreary forms of amusement the dreariest) reigned supreme.

When the white winner was not sufficiently easy, long consultations between the partners as to where and how the safety stroke was to be played invariably took place. In one game sixteen misses were given on one side and seventeen on the other, the last, after long and anxious deliberation with the adversaries' score standing at 99! In another game (a single) the white was holed twenty-six times by one player, or, in other words, more than fifty per cent. of his score resulted from the white winner. Had the white counted three, no less than seventy-five per cent. of the score would have resulted. This is no imaginary

picture; the above facts are borrowed from a letter written to 'The Times' by the present writer, and the circumstances narrated (saving the celebrated miss) were of common occurrence.

The fine players who advocate the above change do not play much with ordinary mortals, and forget their little weaknesses.

The question of a championship match is a delicate one for an amateur to touch on. It is of course most unsatisfactory that the Championship should be played on a special kind of table, involving as it does a different style of game, and if by any means the ordinary table could be used a great step would be gained. In an excellent article in the 'Billiard Review' for May 1896 Mr. John Roberts deals, *inter alia*, with this question and with the need for revision of the rules. As to the championship he says: 'One solution would be to spot the red ball on the pyramid spot, whenever it is pocketed off the billiard spot. The Hon. H. Coke was, I think, the originator of this idea, and it strikes me as being an excellent one. Were it adopted the championship table might be abolished, and there would be no necessity to bar any stroke except the "jamb." The push stroke could be abolished or not, as decided by the framers of the new rules.'

With regard to the rules he says: 'The necessity of recasting the rules seems to be admitted all round. . . . I think it would be best that the committee should consist wholly of amateurs. Suggestions and criticisms could be invited from professionals if desired. For my part, I would be willing to place my services unreservedly at the disposal of such a committee to make as much or as little use of my assistance as might be thought proper.'

These are weighty words and a generous offer. They prove beyond cavil that the champion is strongly in favour of reform, and show that, however badly I have put the case, I have reasonable grounds for thinking that my main contention is sound. If anything that I have said induces the leading amateurs to turn their serious attention to the subject my object will be gained.

If revision of the rules can by any means be brought about, and if that revision can be (as it should be) made acceptable to the leading London clubs, the Rules of Billiards may, I hope, at no distant date stand in as dignified a position as the Laws of Whist.

OLD SPORTING PRINTS

BY HEDLEY PEEK

No. VIII.

BATTUE HUNTING

ABOUT the year 1668 one of those reactions of fashion which recur alike in art, literature, and amusements passed once more over the world of sport. The playfield of Europe was transformed as it had not been for three centuries. A love of ease and luxury degraded the pastimes and pursuits of the people until hunting degenerated into a mere pageant and the popularity of a game was decided rather by the spectator than the player.

Many writers on sport at the present time prophesy that we shall soon drift into a similar stage of effeminacy; and, though there are signs of reaction, the dilettante spectator who sporteth not is still much to the fore. But though football, cricket, and racing attract these sluggish sportsmen, hunting parties have not for centuries been arranged after a manner suitable to the calm gratification of their taste. It is to be hoped that the time is still far distant when we shall return to the method of the so-called 'sport' which I am about to describe.

So far as it is possible to discover, the fashion first sprang up in Swabia and Bavaria. It then filtered through France, where

it received a little ornamental embellishment, and finally reached the Court of Charles II. of England. The methods adopted in the various countries differ but little, and the engravings, with a few very slight alterations of costume, may explain the sport as carried on at least all over the northern half of Europe. The description of one of these hunting pageants, gathered from many different sources, may be of interest, and will probably be a less tedious means than any other of describing the illustrations.

The scene is laid in some wild part of the country, where game was well preserved and deer—or, in Central Europe, wild boar—were plentiful, to say nothing of hares, foxes, &c. Each lord or prince, vying with his neighbours in rivalry as to who should make the largest bag, preserved his estates with a severity which would astonish a modern Conservative magistrate, and give anti-sport editors an opportunity to startle even their hardened readers.[1] Any cover from 1,000 to 5,000 acres, if surrounded by open land for some distance on every side, made a good centre for operations. At one corner of this wood a large space of from

No. 1

five to fifteen acres was left clear, and a carriage-way in more or less good repair led thither.

Weeks before the day fixed for one of these grand hunting pageants, invitations were sent out, and the work of the har-

[1] N.B. I have been unable to discover any paper corresponding to the 'Field' in these days, so probably the record bags are not forthcoming.

bourers and their innumerable staff of assistants began in earnest. To these men was given the real sport, and we are indebted to

No. 2

one of their chiefs—Ridinger, the huntsman and artist—for most of our illustrations. To them fell the delightful occupation of watching through the year the wild life and habits of these

No. 3

denizens of the forest, of trapping and shooting the foxes or wolves that were not required for sport, and, occasionally, of

netting some of the deer or wild boar which their masters required to be removed to some other estate.

But their real business commenced a few weeks before the hunting day. From every village on the vast estate the labourers, small farmers, woodcutters, &c. were collected. The deer were driven from the outlying hills into that part of the country which surrounded the central enclosure. That cover itself required no little preparation If a wood was used year after year for the same purpose, the work would only need repair; but on the first occasion the labour was very considerable. First a large number of rides had to be cut, and these were left open;

No. 4

while all round this central forest—a little way from the outside, so as not to cause suspicion—the underwood was bent down, and in places strengthened by stout poles. If the undergrowth was too thin, nets were hung, so that entrance or escape, except by the rides, was by no means easy. When only deer had to be considered this labour was not so serious as may appear at first sight; for a hart, fearing for its antlers, does not care for thick underwood, and the hinds will usually follow their lord.

As the fatal day approaches, the quarry are driven still nearer to the enclosure, and many take refuge therein, until, when the morning of slaughter dawns, the deer are hiding beneath the

leafy shade of the cover which has been turned into a fatal trap. The work of the harbourers and beaters is, for the time being, well-nigh accomplished. The doors of this vast cage must still be closed, but this is soon effected by stretching across each entrance

No. 5

to a ride strong netting about ten feet in height, supported on stout poles which are firmly driven into the ground.

The harbourers and huntsmen, having stationed men with sharp-pointed spears at intervals around the wood, for fear that some weak spot may have been unnoted, then refresh themselves with a long draught and a short rest until it shall please the lordly party to arrive. At last in the distance the watchers see a long line of horses approach. Each groom is in charge of three horses, and the gorgeous liveries of the men and the trappings of the steeds are faintly suggested year by year in that revival of past pomp, which is displayed in November by the Lord Mayor of London. Closely following this procession may now be seen men riding—

'And Doggs, such whose cold secrecy is ment
By Nature for surprise, on these attend,
Wise temp'rate Lime-Hounds[1] that proclaim no scent
Nor harb'ring will their mouths in boasting spend.'

[1] Hounds in leash.

'As soon as the horses and hounds are assembled the Huntsman in charge disposes the chosen Relays'—

'Now each Relay a sev'ral station findes
Ere the triumphant Train the copps surrounds,
Relays of Horse, long breath'd as winter windes
And their deep Cannon-Mouth'd experienced Hounds.'

The business of those in charge of each relay is to keep the horses and hounds with which they are entrusted ready for any

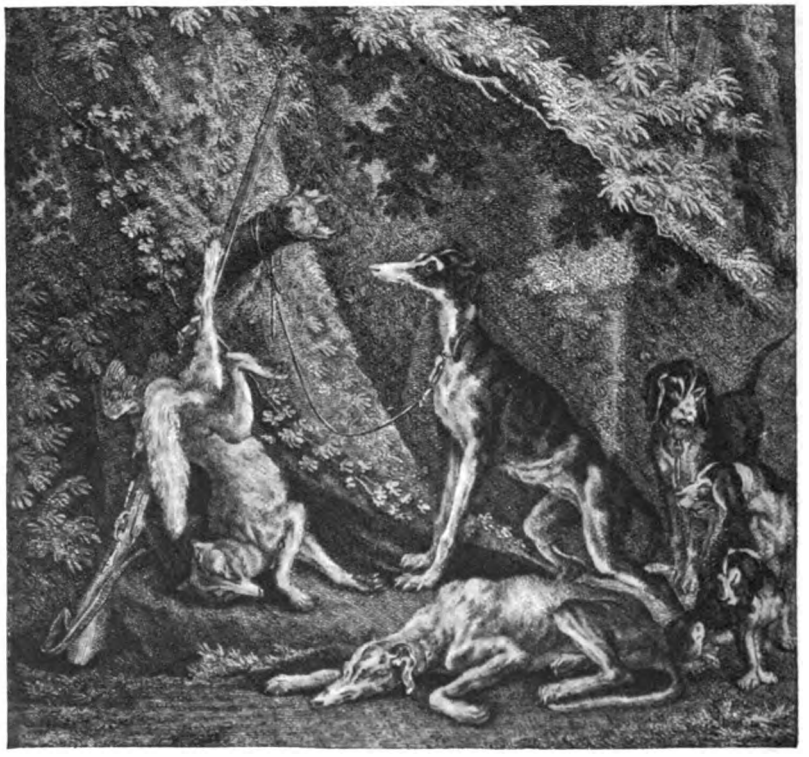
No. 6

party of huntsmen who, coming in their direction, may require fresh mounts or a new pack.

Everything is now ready, and a long line of carriages and horsemen may be seen coming slowly toward the place of meeting. The sun, which is by this time high in the heavens, is reflected from the gilded coaches and the gold and silver trappings of the horses. As for the riders,

'All were like Hunters, clad in cheerfull green,
Young Nature's livery, and each at strife
Who most adorn'd in favours should be seen
Wrought kindly by the Lady of his life.'

The carriages were at length drawn up outside the clearing, which had been surrounded either by 10-foot netting or a stout fence. In the centre of this open space, or at one end of it, might have been seen an erection something after the fashion of one of the grand stands at a contemporary racecourse. While the Huntsman and beaters were now busy preparing for the final drive, the great hunting feast, which has been handed



No. 7

down to us in the shape of the Hunt breakfast, commenced. Tables were spread, and every delicacy in which the epicure of the age delighted was spread forth in profusion. About this time the black page-boy was in fashion, and then every lady of quality would have her dusky favourite to attend to her wants; nor was even the pet lapdog forgotten on these festive occasions. Wine flowed freely, and the whole scene must have resembled some grand royal picnic rather than a preliminary for the chase.

The warm summer air, the leafy shade beneath which lovers rested and flirted, the sound of laughter and of uproarious merriment, would have made a striking contrast to what now meets our eyes on a hunting morning.

At length the word is given :

'Now winde they a Recheat, the rows'd Dear's knell,
And through the Forrest all the Beasts are aw'd,
Alarm'd by Ecchoe, Nature's sentinel
Which shows that Murdrous Man is come abroad.'

No. 8

At the sound of the horns the members of the hunting party begin to take their places, either in the grand stand or on platforms fixed to the branches of trees. Some mount their horses to be ready for the latter part of the entertainment.

What opportunities must not these festivals have offered to some sly lover, reclining 'beneath the Oaken umbrage,' as he strove to capture a heart by force of that most deadly weapon, the tongue!

But as our subject is the hunting of another hart, we will now follow the harbourers and watch them at their work. Still

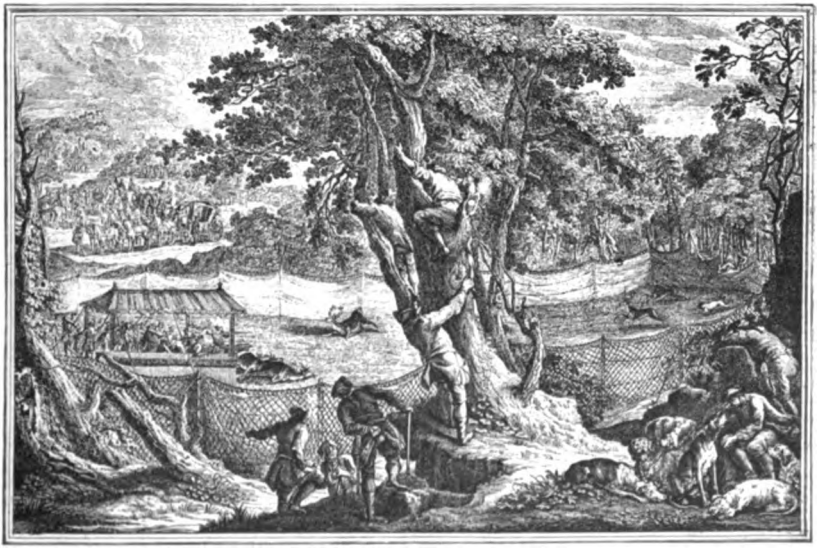
No. 9

leaving the guard to protect the outside barrier, they gather the beaters together at the further side of the forest, and begin to beat towards the open enclosure. As their object is to secure as big a bag as possible in honour of their master, and as with every precaution the deer are certain to break through in places, men are stationed at the end of each of the rides behind the netting. It is the duty of these marksmen to account for all the deer, and as many of the other animals as they can. This is often no easy task, for when one or two stags become entangled in a netting, they are apt to break it down, and enable those following to escape. If a number of wild-boar are in the wood, the difficulty is increased, and men with spears are told off to assist the gunners.

After a time the foremost deer are driven into the enclosure. Maddened by fear, they dash wildly against the strong barricade, and the spectacle begins. Many of the hounds, now unleashed,

follow them from the wood, and a disgusting butchery begins; the more fortunate victims are shot down by sportsmen in the grand stand; some are speared as they dash against the netting; others, less happy, are killed by the hounds. But the best fencing must give way at last before such an attack as follows, when still thicker and thicker becomes the crowd of fugitives. At length a breach is made, and one by one the deer escape and fly wildly over the plain. The hunting-hounds, which, till now, have been kept in readiness, are let loose, and separate parties choose their quarry and go in pursuit.

How many of these were usually paid huntsmen and how many were guests are points difficult to decide. From certain remarks made by contemporary writers, it would appear that the greater number who attended these festivals took little or no active part in the sport, and in some cases the whole performance would seem to have been about as edifying and improving as is the spectacle presented at a modern bull-fight.



No. 10

It must not for a moment be inferred from this description that there was no other kind of hunting practised at the close of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century. Battue hunting was but a temporary and short-lived fashion which lasted in England a few years, and soon died out owing to

the obvious inconvenience and expense attending such entertainments in our own country. It has, however, considerable interest for us, for it left behind it, if I am not much mistaken, the great popularity of our race meetings. These gatherings, which followed the extinction of the former pageant, resemble the Hunt meetings in many ways. I fancy that it was owing to the fact that England had become too thickly populated and too sparsely supplied with deer at this period that racing which before this had

No. 11

been held by many in comparatively slight esteem, began to take its place as a royal pastime, attended with much show and festivity.

But while the Court and some of the more wealthy lords, even so far north as the estates of the Duke of Newcastle, turned hunting into a festival, the British squire carried on his sport in the old fashion, and cared for none of these things.

A word of apology is almost needed for having, in an article on Sporting Prints, gone so fully into this description—that is to say, an apology to those who have not made a study of ancient sport. Those well acquainted with the subject will, I trust, have

No. 12

already anticipated the reason. In no work with which I am acquainted, British or foreign, has a full description of this method of so-called hunting been given. It was necessary to piece together from plans, illustrations, and scattered allusions, the methods of battue-hunting. In one book we get the measurements of the enclosure, and the rules for harbourers and huntsmen; in another an account of the festal scene; in others some records of the chase, and so forth. As few people can consult all these works, and as the illustrations are absolutely unintelligible without them, it seemed better to devote one article to throwing what light I could on the subject.

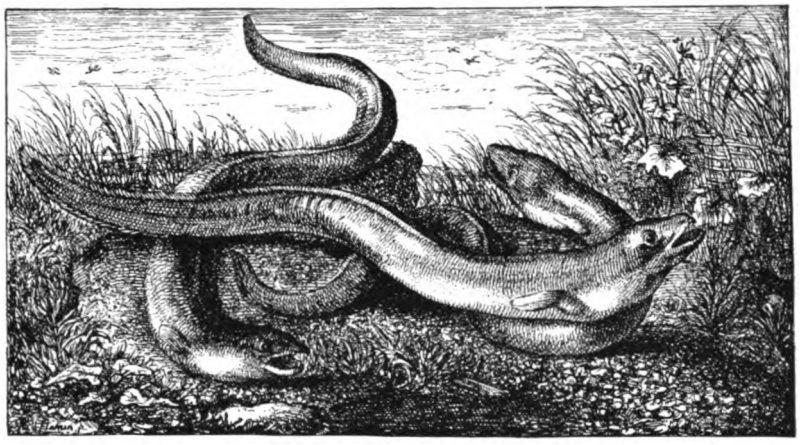
I have endeavoured not to drift outside the region of trustworthy information while describing one of these larger gatherings, but that between such grand displays and the quiet hunting of the squire there must have been many degrees of similar, though smaller, entertainments is not only evident from historical allusions but from common sense. As fashion drifts downwards, it is apt to increase in stupidity as it diminishes in splendour, till it becomes little better than squalid snobbishness. It is therefore fortunate that from an illustrative point of view it need be followed no further.

The illustrations 1–10 are by Ridinger, and though I have been trying to discover some further information about the life of this remarkable artist, I can find nothing authentic beyond that which has appeared in my previous articles. In fact, the man himself and his sporting history are wrapped in a cloud, made none the less obscure by the old German of the period, which many modern students of the language are unable satisfactorily to translate.

Illustration No. 11 is chiefly of interest as showing how little costumes varied in England and Germany at this time. The picture is from a mezzotint engraved by John Smith after a painting by Jan Wyck. This well-known artist was born about 1640 at Haarlem, and was brought over by his father to England, where he distinguished himself as a painter, many of his scenes being laid in Scotland. Besides his more important works, he made designs for a book on Hunting and Hawking. He died at Mortlake in 1702.

No. 12 is taken from an original drawing by Nicolaes Berchem, who was also born in Haarlem, in the year 1620. After studying, first under his father, and then under Jan van Goyen and Jan Weenix, he at length found for himself a newer and more interesting manner than that of his teachers, and became the

great and only rival of his contemporary, Jan Both. A rather interesting story of these two great artists' rivalry is handed down. A burgomaster living at Dordrecht commissioned Berchem and Both each to paint a picture. He offered an additional reward to the one whose work was most approved, though who was to be the judge history does not relate. The Burgomaster was, however, so delighted with both the pictures when he saw them that he saved further trouble by giving 'a prize of fame' to each artist. What became of Both's picture I do not know, but I believe Berchem's is in the Hermitage Collection at St. Petersburg. The example here reproduced of this artist's work stands, to my mind, in the front rank of contemporary Dutch art, especially in the draughtsmanship of the horses and the delicate design and execution of the background. The deer are, however, as bad as the conventional stiffness, so common at this time, could make them.



TARPON-FISHING

BY HERMIONE MURPHY-GRIMSHAW

TARPON-FISHING at Fort Myers and Punta Gorda is becoming every year more popular, for few who have once experienced the charm of it can resist a second trial of its excitements and numerous vicissitudes. At the above-named places it is, of course, bottom-fishing; but I think comparatively few people have tried the very exciting form it takes at Captiva Pass, an inlet from the Gulf of Mexico.

We reached Florida on March 6, and first went to Punta Gorda, a place we had been recommended to try, and had also read of as a good tarpon ground. We arrived at twelve o'clock at night, after a hot and rather monotonous journey of twelve hours 'on the cars' from Jacksonville, with only two mishaps to the train—one, a blaze arising from heated bearings; the other, insufficiency of fuel, which was soon remedied by the engine-driver and stoker going out with a hatchet.

Floridian scenery, after the first twenty miles or so, is necessarily much the same, being a dead level and series of swamps and lakes. My unaccustomed eye, however, found a certain charm in the groups of palmetto trees, the brilliant masses of creeping flowers, and the murky-looking bogs and lakes, with their possibilities of alligators and rattlesnakes. Some of the river beds were simply sheets of bright water flowers, and we had

our first glimpse of orange groves, most of which were a sad sight after the 'freeze.' We put it down to this latter event that in this land of oranges we paid ten cents apiece for them.

Six o'clock the next morning found us dressed and anxious to start off up the river at once, brilliant visions of catching the first tarpon of the year that very day hovering before our innocent eyes. But we had to wait till eleven o'clock or so, in order to select a guide and make necessary arrangements as to bait, boats, &c., for tarpon-fishing entails a considerable amount of paraphernalia. When at length our coloured guide had got some bait and was ready, we started off up the river in a naphtha launch, towing a tarpon boat behind, listening with greedy ears to the tales of past glorious fights with gigantic tarpon, and seeing one in every fish that jumped. The bait, by the way, was the nuisance of our lives. There was hardly a day that we did not have a long wait for it. We would arrive down on the pier about six on a lovely sunshiny morning, having breakfasted long before, and keen to be off trying our luck with those elusive tarpon, only to be told that 'the bait had not come.' After twenty minutes or more of fuming and making certain we should hopelessly lose the tide, a nigger would dawdle up with the two dozen or so of mullet, and away we would go. Those early morning expeditions up the seven miles or more of Peace River in the bustling little naphtha launch were delightful. There was always plenty to see—flocks of a very pretty little black duck with a white head, that would let us approach quite near, then rise in a body, keeping about a foot above the water, and settle a few hundred yards further ahead; huge, awkward, good-natured pelicans, decorating every post and stick and sandbank; or fishing eagles with a keen eye to a rising fish. Then we would generally note a few alligators asleep on the mud. One morning we saw twelve, most of them a dozen feet or more in length—slimy brutes that would drop noiselessly into the water when disturbed—or one might catch a glimpse of a coon slinking along in the grass.

The vegetation, too, is lovely, coming right down to the water's edge. Every dead tree and bough is decorated by the vividly beautiful air plant, white and scarlet. The reeds, too, were full of twittering, quarrelling rice birds, and one would now and then catch a flash of crimson, as a red bird rose and fled before us. The river is full of little green islands and barren sandbanks. We took a fancy to one of the latter, right in mid-stream, and spent two or three scorching days there, as we had evolved a theory that tarpon might come and feed in

the shallows off it. As the coloured guide we had then did not care what happened so long as he had as little work as possible, this arrangement suited him very well; for all he had to do was to lie in the sun and invent stories of exploits with the other fishermen he had been with, and occasionally rouse our flagging spirits by seeing an imaginary tarpon jump or blow bubbles. Afterwards, when we had more experience, we really admired the ingenuity he had shown in keeping us quiet and hopeful so long. We parted from that guide in anger, and afterwards discovered that what we had begun to suspect was true—that he had never seen a tarpon killed in all his life.

Day after day, starting at 5.30 or 6 A.M., returning after sunset, did we patiently fish every inch of that river; but though we caught cat-fish by the hundred, sharks till we were tired of them, and now and then a jew-fish, there did not appear to be a tarpon within a day's journey of Punta Gorda. Still, we never had a dull moment with so much to see and watch; and then every nibble we had *might* have been a tarpon—that is, till we got to know the jerk of the shark and the drag, drag of the cat-fish.

At last, after six weeks of more or less patient waiting, we saw our first *bona fide* tarpon! We had started one morning at four, and had taken the launch down to Crow Key, a charming group of islands about fifteen miles below Punta Gorda. We spent the morning paddling about and casting fruitlessly in every inviting-looking pool. The water was only from six inches to four feet deep, as the place we were fishing formed a sort of lake in between the islands, and we could see the movements and wake of every big fish. Suddenly we observed a considerable disturbance on the water. Maguire, our guide, jumped up and shouted excitedly, 'There's a tarpon!' reeled up, put on fresh bait, and cast over in the fish's direction. The line whistled out, and after a few minutes of breathless watching we saw, sticking up more than a foot out of the water, a tail that was unmistakably that of a tarpon, exactly as had been described in the first article on tarpon-fishing in this Magazine. After that the fish behaved in every way according to the rules laid down for him by Mr. Mygatt. He was in the act of picking up the bait, standing on his head to do it; in a moment the line began to run out, first slowly, then quicker and quicker every second, till at last the reel was positively humming. By this time Maguire had the anchor up and we were well away after the fish. Our feelings may be better imagined than described at having actually got one on at last, after six whole weeks of waiting. My husband had insisted on

my having the first blood. The tarpon had made six or seven splendid leaps before he settled down to his long rush. We flew after him: now I reeled up a yard or two of slack; now I held on with both thumbs pressed on the break till they were numb; then, as he had made another leap and lash, having nearly every yard of line run off (one fishes with about two hundred yards of line), I gradually worked him nearer and nearer the boat, and we could see what a splendid fish he was. At last we were in shallow water. Maguire leaped out, gaff in hand; the fish was lying on his side not two feet from the boat. Maguire, much excited at having got the first tarpon of the season, struck at him—and missed him clean! With a jerk and a rush the tarpon made off again into deep water, literally towing the boat; the guide had only just time to scramble in. After another ten minutes, which tried my unaccustomed arms severely, we got him in again to almost the same place, when suddenly I felt a horrible jerk, all strain ceased, and he was gone! Words failed us, and we gazed at each other in blank bewilderment. It really seemed incredible. When we had recovered sufficiently to examine the line, it looked as though it had been cut through, and we concluded that the guide must have snicked it with the gaff. It was a bitter blow after having practically killed the fish. We went home a very dejected party, and that was the first and last tarpon we saw while at Punta Gorda.

Several times we went back to Crow Key on the chance of finding another. It was a curious place, literally swarming with fish. After leaving the launch we had to pole nearly a mile through crystal-clear water only a foot or even less in depth. One day, just before getting into the shallows, we passed through an immense school of stingarees; they looked like huge submerged birds, flapping their wing-like sides. There were quantities of dangerous-looking sharks, and occasional porpoise and saw-fish there too. I hooked one of the latter one day, but after playing it for some time, and getting it right up to the boat, the guide cut it off, saying they were very dangerous, and attack a boat with their saw sometimes—an absurd idea which is very prevalent among the coloured guides. I had a curious run of luck there. I was, as usual, fishing for tarpon, when the bait was taken by something very large, which proved to be a heavy channel bass. It fought very hard, but in ten or twelve minutes we gaffed it, and it turned out to be a splendid spotted bass, weighing 32 lbs. I cast the same bait again in the same place, within a few seconds got another bite, and after another struggle captured a second

spotted bass, just under 32 lbs. I cast the same bait the third time, and within ten minutes a third bass was lying in the boat. He weighed just under 30 lbs.; they were a fine trio. The bass is very like a salmon in shape, and of a beautiful opalescent brownish-grey, with one large black spot on the tail; hence its name.

Finally we decided to go seventy miles further down to Fort Myers, and for a fortnight our bad luck seemed to have followed us. At last the spell was broken by a splendid tarpon that fell to my share, weighing 147 lbs. and measuring 6 ft. 8 in. He gave me a fight of one hour fifty-five minutes, and I was very glad when I saw him gaffed; for he was a sulker, and after the first few leaps would do nothing but bore down and down, till trying to raise him was like trying to lift a house. We fished most comfortably at Fort Myers, having a very nice sailing boat and two of the best guides in the place, both first-rate fishermen and thoroughly nice fellows. We used to tow our tarpon boats and sail up and down the river, either down towards Nigger Head or up towards the historic ground of Beautiful Island, where Mr. Mygatt made his record catch of eight fish in one day. One of our guides—Santi, by the way—was his guide on that occasion. Those days will always stand out to us as among the happiest and pleasantest of our lives, when we would start off in the pearly grey or the brilliantly sunny morning about six o'clock, with the possibility of five or six tarpon between us, and always the prospect of a long and exciting time. On a hot day the water would be as smooth as glass, and the heat so intense, from the reflection off it of the sun's rays, that one felt like being in a huge warming-pan with the lid shut. On particularly hot days the small boats became impossible at midday, and we had to go on board the sailing boat, put up the awning, and doze and chat the time away, with the sky a cloudless expanse of shimmering heat and the water a stretch of blazing molten lead without a ripple, only broken by the occasional lazy rolling of a porpoise, the bubbles blown by a feeding tarpon, or the jumping of the irrepressible mullet, which leap literally in thousands.

The fish were very late in coming up the river last year, owing, they say, to the severe winter, which kept the water cold so long, that the fish preferred the warmer waters of the Gulf; and as we were not having the sport we had expected, and we heard wondrous tales of the fishing at Captiva Pass, we decided to go there. As we intended to camp on the island—indeed, the choice lay between that and living on board your boat—we

went round the town, laying in provisions, pots and pans, also a couple of camp bedsteads, and various odds and ends. We started at seven o'clock one fine morning about the middle of April on the steamer 'Lawrence,' plying between Punta Gorda and Fort Myers. The captain, with whom we had made friends on our downward journey, agreed to tow our sailing boat for us; our tarpon boats and guides were on board, also a goodly supply of provisions, chickens in coops, ice, and a big young darkey cook, who had a genius for his trade and a curious habit of holding a constant animated conversation with himself. After a leisurely passage of some five hours—for the 'Lawrence' scorns to hurry, and also frequently runs aground, which means some delay and manœuvring—we stopped about a mile from Captiva Pass, and were turned out into our own boat. Presently we arrived at beautiful Captiva Island, which, lying like a jewel on the deep blue waters of the Gulf, surely must have strayed from amongst the isles of the blest. Never was there such a divine climate; never had one seen such a beach, of shells whiter than driven snow, with linings of tenderest pink, washed by waves clearer than crystal, varying from deepest azure to palest emerald green.

The whole island is thickly treed and covered with a luxuriant scrub, chiefly of prickly pear, with its brilliant yellow cactus flower and reddish purple fruit on one and the same plant, creamy wild cotton blossoms, a vivid scarlet flower growing to a height of five or six feet on a curious straight, thorny stem, with no foliage at all, and numberless other varieties. The butterflies also are another great feature of this lovely island, some nearly as large as birds, some deep orange, some palest pink shading into a rich crimson, others scarlet or pale blue, or sulphur yellow; and wonderful dragon flies of all sizes, one a kind of kingfisher blue. In every dead branch are the scarlet and white air plants, and all round one hears the mocking bird. The air is so exhilarating that one feels one must be up and doing all the time. We bathed several times by moonlight; it seemed more like an enchanted island than an everyday place that could be found again. Captiva Island is only inhabited by four or five Spanish fishermen who have built five palmetto huts on the beach under some large trees. In one we cooked and ate; the cleanest was given up to us to sleep in. It was a very simple structure, covered with palmetto thatch, with two holes in the sides for light and entrance, the only furniture wooden trestles fixed in the ground, on one of which I used to erect my bedstead, as the whole place was alive with cockroaches; and one day I saw a

large yellow snake emerge from the side of the hut. The floor was just shingle, which made cleaning up a simple process, as a rake over removed all signs of dirt. But we were as comfortable as possible. I found it delightful to sleep with only a ragged thatch between myself and the sky, and to be able to walk straight out, when I woke between four and five on a glorious morning, on to the beach, with the shining Gulf in front of me.

At Captiva one fishes on the flood tide; the Pass is about three-quarters of a mile wide and half a mile long. The best places for the fish are the tide rips, where they play, and there it is every guide's ambition to anchor. Great jealousy exists as to who shall get the best place, and a spot once secured, one always sticks to it, the anchor being left with an old oil can, or anything that will float, attached to it as a buoy.

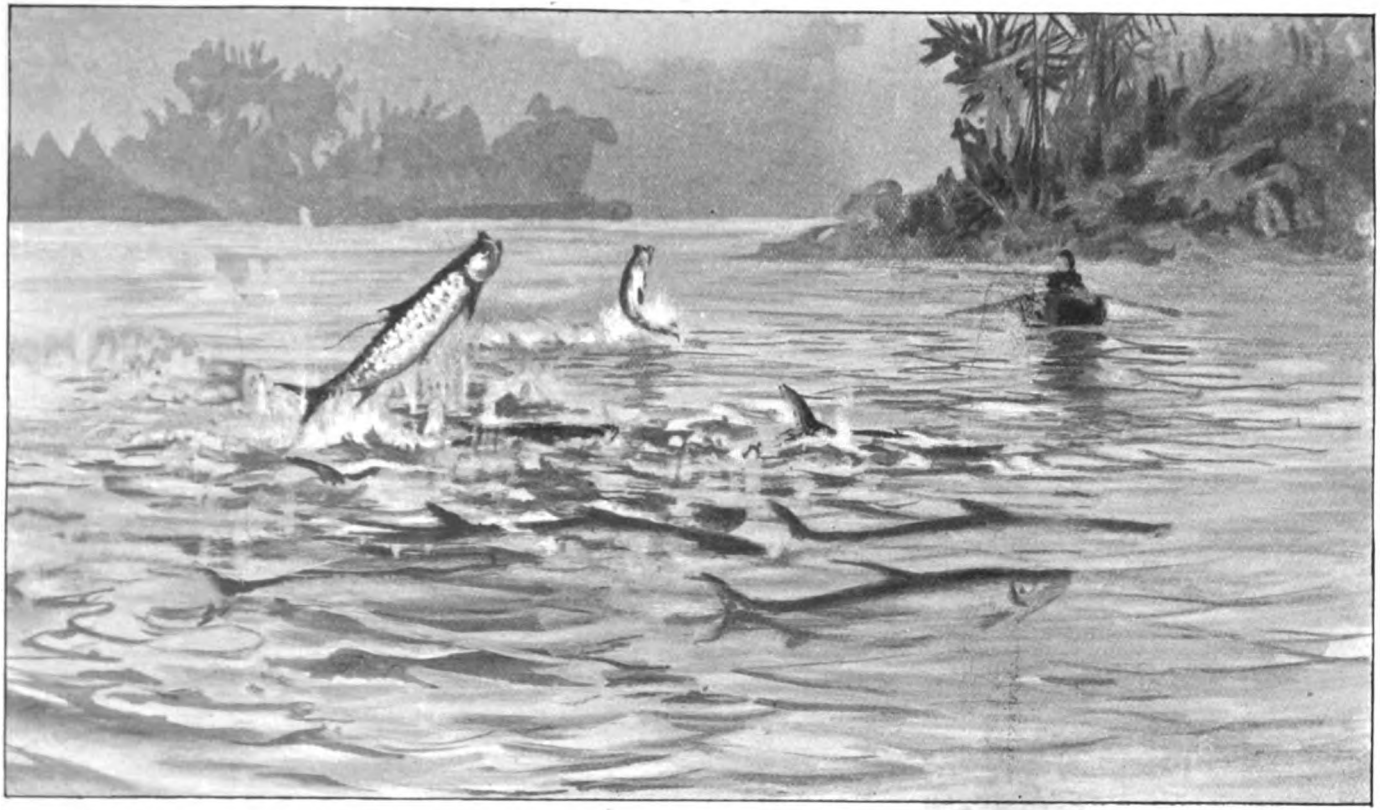
The tide ebbs and flows at the rate of five to eight knots an hour, so that it is like a mill race, and the fisher must coast up in the slack water and drop down into his place to anchor. The boats lie within five yards of each other, so with one hand one holds the rod while the other is engaged in keeping off the neighbouring boats as they swing to their moorings. There was about half a mile to row from the camp to the Pass, and an hour or so before flood tide all the boats would be seen racing down to secure their positions and make all ready for the fray. Six or seven boats were there with us, and, as all the guides were either relatives or friends, great was the chaffing and fun going on.

In bottom fishing the more rods you have out the more chances of bites. At Captiva the fish bite so voraciously and incessantly that you can only manage two rods, for self and guide. Even then you can only reckon to hook one fish out of every ten strikes, which appears to be a pretty fair average. Whereas in still-water fishing one waits for the fish to gorge the bait before striking, at Captiva one must strike the very instant he bites, as otherwise he spits the bait out on feeling the line, and you have to strike with all your might and main too, for the tarpon's huge mouth is lined with a sort of coat of mail, and there is only one soft spot in the roof of it, about an inch or two inches at most in length, which appears to be the skin covering the divisions of the bone.

The bait is a slice of the soft, silvery part of the mullet, about the size of a herring. The hook is put through two inches from the end, and the shank, seized to the end of the bait, connected with the line by 3 ft. of piano wire. You need, on the whole, a more limber rod than for bottom fishing, to enable you to keep a tight

line on your fish, which, owing to the motion of the boat on the generally very rough water, is a matter of extreme difficulty.

The tarpon are in such thousands in the Pass that it is a really marvellous sight to see these magnificent fish leaping and rolling and playing, the water simply thick with them; and to us, who had fished for six whole weeks, only seeing two tarpon all the time, it was almost like a dream. They will come within five feet of the boat, striking the line incessantly, and one frequently has a strike before the bait has really got clear of the boat. I have lost several fish through their going off with the bait before the line has had time to get wet, and through their taking it out at such a pace that it burned through thick glove and flesh almost to the bone. After two nights' fishing, after dozens of strikes (my husband once counted seventeen in thirty minutes to his own rod alone), every one of which we lost, either through the hook breaking or the tarpon spitting out the bait, the moment arrived. The fish were biting hard, we were reeling up or paying out incessantly, for directly anyone hooks a fish the shout 'Reel up' goes down the row, to give the lucky one a chance of getting his fish clear, as they double about so. Suddenly I felt a convulsive tug; I struck as hard as I could; up rose a huge mass of gleaming silver, apparently yards high into the air, twenty feet off. I heard the shout 'Reel up;' Santi cried, 'Lay it into him again.' The mass disappeared, only to come up a second and a third and a fourth time, always in a fresh place, shaking his splendid head frantically in the effort to get rid of the hook. I instinctively kept the line as taut as possible, while Santi flung out his buoy, reeled up his line, and away we went, the fish towing us with a seven-knot tide towards the Gulf. Again and again he made his gigantic leaps, showing him to be a really huge fish; then he settled down to a long, determined fight. I worked him as hard as I could, getting in a yard or two of line at a time, or holding on as tight as I dared whenever he made a sudden dash, keeping the rod as straight up as possible, while Santi gradually edged nearer and nearer to the shore. Every now and then the tarpon would make a fresh leap, and dart out into deep water again, taking out as much or more line than the first time; but at last the nose of the boat touched the beach. Santi leapt out knee-deep into the water; I scrambled after him; then the real tug of war began! Santi ran up and down by me, shouting out directions; all I was conscious of was that I would hang on to that tarpon or die. I could hardly feel the break under my thumb as I breathlessly hauled away at him, and it is no joke running



SIMPLY THICK WITH THEM

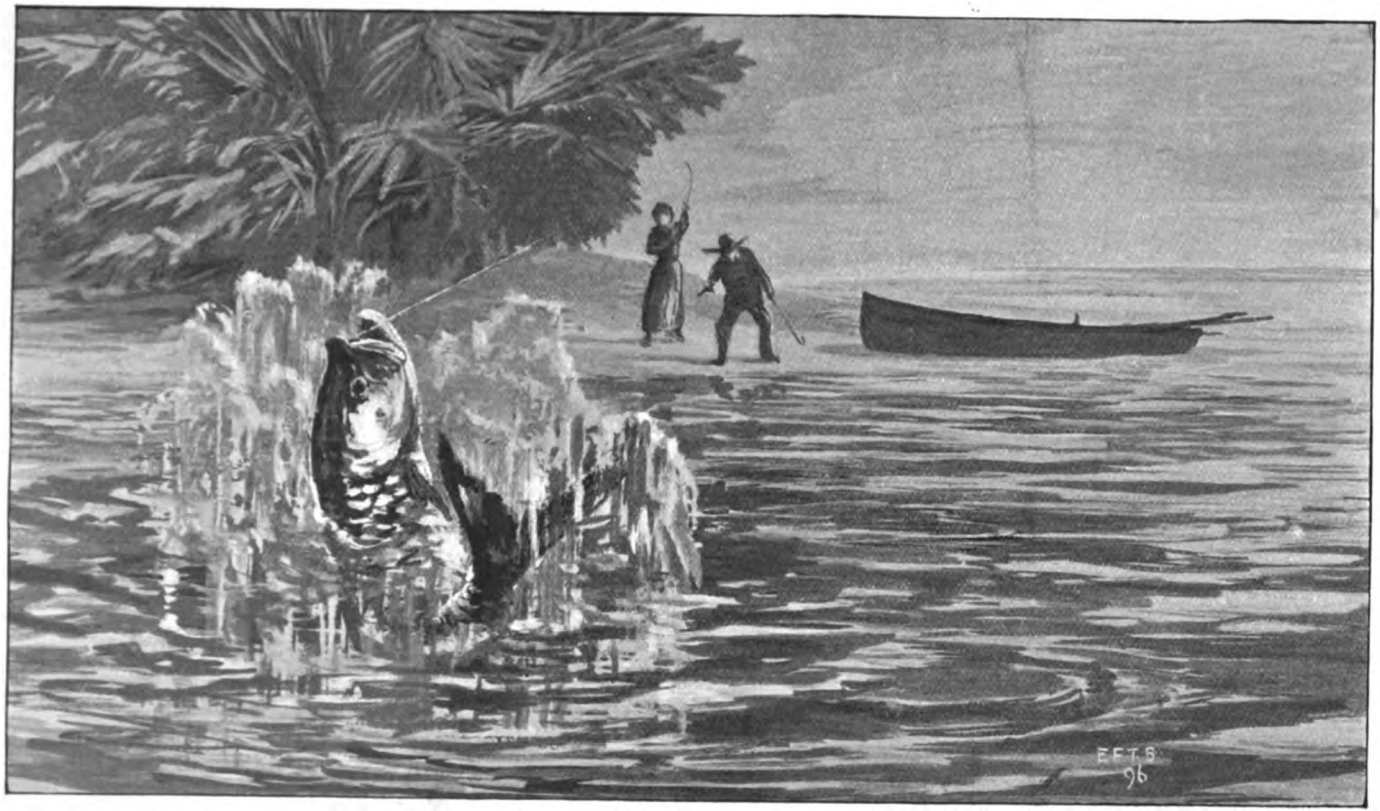
up and down a shingly beach with 130 lbs. fighting for dear life at the other end of your line. For about twenty minutes the struggle lasted, I slowly working my way up backwards, dragging the fish in, then running to the water's edge to reel up the slack, then holding on with both hands as the tarpon leaped and threw himself about wildly, the one thing to guard against being to allow the reel to overrun, which would mean an instant snapping of the line. It keeps all one's faculties on the alert, for it seems so marvellous how such a slender, almost invisible, thread can hold such a monster. At last his rushes got shorter; he came in a little further after each jump; we could see him distinctly, and Santi began to make ready for the final act. But he was a very cunning fish, always had one eye on the gaff, and would slew round and be off out of reach every time. At last, with all the strength I could muster, I held him firm, and Santi with one clean stroke gaffed him and pulled him high and dry on the shore. He weighed 125 lbs. and measured 6 ft. 5 in.

The next night my husband hooked a gigantic fish which towed him right out into the Gulf. He and Tillett, his guide, disappeared for over two hours. We went in search, and found them triumphant but exhausted after a tremendous fight. The tarpon measured 6 ft. 11 in. and weighed 175 lbs., and my husband had the additional glory of gaffing it himself. That same night he caught a second fish measuring 6 ft. 8 in., weighing 150 lbs. I had landed one measuring 6 ft. 5 in., and 135 lbs. in weight; they did look three beauties lying side by side in the moonlight!

It is the uncertainty that makes sport so fascinating at Captiva. Till the fish is high and dry at your feet you must never make sure of him. There are so many things against your killing him. For instance, it is most difficult to find the sort of hooks that work best there; a large hook seems to succeed one day, a small one the next, so one can never rely on either. We tried triple hooks, double hooks, bass hooks, tarpon hooks of all makes and sizes; the last generally seemed the best all round. Then, if you do get your fish to shore, just as you think you have safely secured him he gives a jump and spits the hook out. That is about the most aggravating thing of all. The boats have been safely cleared, the first jump, generally the most ticklish of all, weathered; you may have been working him for ever so long, and you have begun to congratulate yourself on having at any rate *hooked* him fast enough, when away he goes! It is often extremely difficult to get clear of all the boats and lines, however

quickly the others may reel up, in the turmoil, splashing, and confusion of getting the buoy out, &c. For instance, one day I had on a very large fish, which made a wild dash up stream, then suddenly turned round in his tracks, met our buoy on the way back, took three clean turns round it, and went straight on towards the Gulf. I concluded that the fish was lost, but Santi began rowing like mad; we reached the fatal buoy; Santi said, 'Let out your line as hard as you can,' and by a stroke of genius managed to unloose the tangle and clear the line: all this with a tarpon tearing down stream and the boat swinging wildly without the oars to steady it. We killed that fish; he was a very big one. Another fish that I killed never swallowed the bait or hook at all. He had gone off with the line, and having worked him right up to the boat I noticed, to my astonishment, that the bait was trailing some fifteen feet behind him. I pointed it out to Santi, who was just as much puzzled as I was, and we then saw the line was wound somehow round the tarpon's body, and had become entangled in his scissors, which accounted for the curious way in which it kept slip, slipping as I reeled up or paid out line. It required rather careful handling, and it was difficult to tire the fish, but I managed to bring him up to the gaff, and he was a particularly good one, 6 ft. 10 in., and over 150 lbs. Now and then a tarpon will regularly jump at you in his leaps; we often had them come nearly into the boat, and they are alarming-looking antagonists when their gigantic mouths are open.

When sport was bad we used to troll, which was very exciting, as it was always under more or less difficult conditions; after a still sunny afternoon watching the magnificent panorama of the sunset over the Gulf, with the breakers dashing in tipped with their snowy line of foam, the sky like a blood-red battle-field with gloomy phalanges of lurid clouds rolling away on either side to display the pale, calm evening sky, or perhaps a wild, mysterious, dark expanse with only occasional gleams through the scudding drifts of vapoury clouds, and a big sea racing in; on all sides huge silvery bodies leaping and splashing, seeming bigger and more numerous even in the half gloom. The gleam of the silvery bait spinning through the water, as we rapidly row along and round and round, seems to drive the tarpon wild; they race and dart around, and snatch at it with such tugs that one's rod is nearly dragged from one's hands, and the uncertain light makes the leaping and the playing and the general turmoil almost weird, as a hungry tarpon grabs the bait, gives several fierce jerks and leaps, shaking his massive head, subsiding with a splash that



A SLENDER, ALMOST INVISIBLE THREAD

drenches one, perhaps to disappear, perhaps to leap again and again, settling down finally to a determined run that may end in his spitting out the bait, or in a glorious tussle and victory.

There were many other fish to be caught in the Pass, that would give us plenty of sport in the intervals of tarpon-fishing. We used generally to start with a few of these, to contribute towards the delicious chowder our talented *chef* would concoct for every meal. Among them were black grouper and red ones of that ilk, the latter very pretty, with a huge rosy red mouth, by far the better eating of the two. These red grouper are very game, and can show a remarkable amount of fight considering their size; they only run 5 or 6 lbs. in weight. I don't know how it was, but I very rarely achieved hooking a grouper; their onslaught on the bait is so sudden, and they are off with it before one realises what has happened; it used to aggravate me dreadfully to keep losing them. I had more success with king fish, which are more difficult to catch; they are queer-looking things, rather of the shape of a pike with all the lovely colours of the mackerel. The king fish is a most bewildering fish to hook; its movements are lightning-like, and it feels almost as strong as a tarpon, only, if possible, more puzzling to manipulate. It also is extremely good to eat.

A great charm of the place are the wonderful shells, of which there are endless varieties. I shall never forget one gorgeous day on which we rowed across the Pass to the opposite island, where the shells were, if possible, more wonderful even than on Captiva. We wandered on and on along the beautiful beach; the tide was going out and the Gulf of Mexico lay before us a miracle of glorious colour and ever-changing charm, of a depth and delicacy of sapphire and emerald such as one must see in those latitudes to believe possible. That day, I remember, my husband lost several good strikes through doing two things at once. There was an old turtle that had been following us about for several days, a very large one; my husband had taken out his rifle to try to pot it; and as sure as ever its silly old head came snapping up he would take aim, and simultaneously a tarpon would bite and leap, and he would lose both.

The time came all too soon for us to leave our Garden of Eden, our Happy Land of radiant mornings, the glowing noontides, the gorgeous sunsets and calm, starry, moonlit nights, when we would sit on the shelly beach, gazing out at the great, solemn moon swinging through the heavens, and noting the phosphorescent wake of some big fish that sailed like a meteor

through the mirrored darkness of the sky; when the very air seemed full of a witchery we had never known before, and the trammels and discomforts of civilisation seemed very far away. Those were happy days when one could wake up in the fresh silence of the dawn, and go straight from one's bed out on to the beach and see the sun rise; when each hour brought its own new delight and the days seemed all too short for the sketching, exploring, and delightful dawdling we had to do. We had packed our belongings, distributed various treasures among the old Spaniards, one of whom had, to our delight, craftily *stolen* the gift we had put out for him on the table in his own hut. One of them had brought us each a sort of loving-cup, compounded of eggs, sugar, various spirits, and canned milk, which we had drunk with due gratitude, and had also found very heady, and after tender and repeated farewells we were off, leaving the five seated in a row on the beach, watching us as we sailed out of sight. Slowly, as we moved away, our Enchanted Island sank below the horizon, and a time was over that we shall never forget for pure enjoyment and good sport.

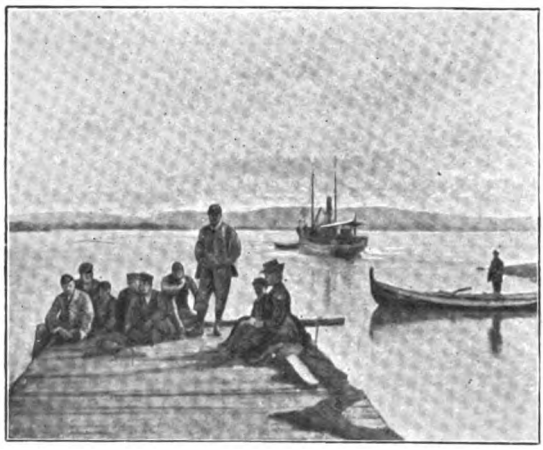
THE RED-DEER OF NORWAY

BY H. SETON-KARR, M.P.

I FIRST saw the Island of Hitteren in July 1873. A friend and I were spending the Oxford long vacation in Norway, and we had landed at Throndhjem. Hearing that red-deer, as well as ryper (red-grouse), black game and trout were to be found in Hitteren, and that the shooting and fishing rights could there be leased from the farmers, we promptly took the next coasting steamer south, and after a five hours' run down the Throndhjem fjord, were landed one lovely summer morning, in company with the postmaster and one or two other natives, on the sea-weedy rocks that do duty for a landing-stage in Havn Bay. The then Havn postmaster was, and his successor now is, the head of the leading Hitteren family of Strom. He was also a large landowner, and one of the keenest and most experienced sportsmen on the island. Through his exertions, rewarded, inadequately no doubt, by a modest commission on the prospective rent, we shortly afterwards became the proud lessees of the sporting rights on an outlying and inferior portion of the island, with paper rights of killing many deer. The best parts of the island were already under lease to different Englishmen. It was in this outlying forest that, by marvellous good luck, I killed my first red-deer stag that same autumn, the only one we saw; and though with a friend I now hold a lease of the largest and most sporting tract in Hitteren,

and would be loth to cross the North Sea for anything less so far as Hitteren is concerned, I still retain a fond recollection of that first lease, and of the first of many Norwegian red-deer it has since been my fortune to kill.

There is every reason to believe that red-deer are indigenous to Scandinavia, as they are, or have been, more or less indigenous to the whole of north-western Europe. I have, however, heard, and even read, the suggestion, unsupported by the slightest evidence, that they were imported to Norway from Scotland, possibly by the great Gustavus Vasa, who played the part of a successful Norske 'Prince Charlie' 300 years ago. There is no solid ground whatever for this theory, whilst natural evidence and probabilities are all the other way. The old pine and birch forests of Great Britain, the forests of Austria, France, and Hungary, have been from time immemorial the natural home of the European red-deer. It is unreasonable to suppose that similar Scandinavian forests, so well adapted to their habits, should not also originally have contained this species of European *fauna*. The fossil remains long since discovered in the peat-bogs of Scania, amongst other places in Norway, are, I think, conclusive evidence on this subject.



AUNE LANDING-STAGE, ISLAND OF HITTEREN, LOOKING EAST

It is probable that at one time red-deer were comparatively plentiful throughout the pine-forests on the mainland of Norway and Sweden, until the increase and incursion of the Russian wolf thinned their numbers, and drove them for safety to the islands of the western seaboard. It may naturally be asked, Why is Hitteren the only place in Norway worthy the name of deer-forest, so far as red-deer are concerned? This is the fact so far as my knowledge goes. There are many other islands in the Throndhjem's Amt, near the Namsen, in the Hardanger, and else-

where, on the western coast, as well as portions of the mainland, almost, if not quite, as well suited in climate, area, locality, and vegetation to shelter and feed a good stock of deer. I believe the chief reason for this singularity is the fact that Hitteren is the only spot where protective laws have been thoroughly well observed as well as passed. The island was discovered by Englishmen a generation ago, and has been more or less leased by them ever since, partly owing to its accessibility. The native owners thus came early to recognise the commercial value of their sporting rights, and have done their best in consequence to maintain the character and value of these rights, which now form their most valuable asset. For the last ten years or so hinds have been protected in Hitteren not only *de jure*, but also *de facto*, and consequently the number of deer has not only been maintained but has increased.

IN THE HARDANGER

Hitteren also possesses some special advantages in locality and climate, which may have something to do with its sporting superiority, but these are not sufficiently marked to form the chief factor in the case, so far as regards the western islands. The Russian-wolf theory and the severity of the winters, coupled with the size and density of its forests, are perhaps sufficient to account for the difficulty of finding red-deer on the mainland, in, for example, such places as the Throndhjem district, opposite Hitteren.

I have visited this district and seen deer-sign, and on one occasion shot a yearling stag there, being in want of meat. The Hitteren deer come and go from this locality. On another occasion I spent a week on the shores of the Hardanger in search of red-deer. We again saw deer-sign, and a fine stag was seen by one of the party who had no rifle. We were also shown some good shed horns, one or two being royal, picked up during the past few years. In a bloodthirsty mood, after several blank days, I

there shot an enormous yeld-hind, the only deer I personally saw. Remington rifles, I am told, are now cheap and plentiful in the Hardanger. Both the above localities are useless for all practical purposes of deer-stalking, the size and roughness of the country, and the density of its cover, being out of all proportion to the stock of deer.

But take such an island as Tusteren, close to Christiansund, which certainly ought to be as good for deer as Hitteren. I have known of splendid stags being killed on this island. In 1882 I shot a stag there that weighed over thirty stone. But the stock of deer now on it, and on Stabben, its neighbour, is, I believe, hardly worth mentioning. Yet it possesses all the natural characteristics of a perfect little deer forest. Its area is over 50,000 acres. High peaks and succulent mountain grasses, dense forests of pine and birch interspersed with lake and stream, sheltered glens and corries, and good meadow and marsh feeding, are all to be found on Tusteren, combined with close proximity to the mainland, where the roving stag can find all the summer range he can possibly desire. The hostile factor in the case is—I speak confidentially—the strongly developed poaching instincts of its inhabitants. An absolutely close time for Tusteren has more than once been enacted by law, with a view of getting up its stock of deer. I believe such an enactment exists at the present moment. But venison has a ready market in Christiansund and Throndhjem, and no questions asked. It is also a valuable article of winter diet at home. Remington rifles are now cheap, and the inhabitants of Tusteren have a thorough knowledge of moving deer to passes. Some of them are good poaching stalkers and fair shots, and, when in want of meat, not in the least particular as to the age or sex of the deer. My readers can draw their own inference.

Moreover, all Norwegian farmers have 'corn-rights,' which in Hitteren we have been careful to buy up. These rights enable deer to be shot in the corn, close season or not; and many a breeding hind and lordly stag with horns half-grown have perished, not only inside, but also outside the corn-fence during the long Norwegian early-summer evenings or at dawn. It remains for some English or Norske millionaire to buy up and depopulate the island of Tusteren in order to turn it into a perfect and most sporting natural deer-forest.

A word now as to some of the details and incidents of Hitteren sport. The island is about forty miles long by fifteen broad, with a considerable fishing and farming population round

its coast. Its whole central portion is practically uninhabited and undisturbed, save by the herders of its few sheep and cattle, by berry-pickers, and occasionally by the woodman's axe. Its pine-clad fjelds run up to some 1,200 feet or more in height, and its open marshes and wooded glens, interspersed with innumerable lakes and streams, form a perfectly natural home for the deer of which I write. There are no more than three decent-sized shootings on the island, all leased by different Englishmen, with one or two smaller tracts, in some cases leased by Throndhjem aristocrats. Sixty thousand acres in its central and southern portion, containing the highest fjelds, the thickest woods, and the largest number of deer, form the forest, one of the above-mentioned three, of which I hold, with a friend, a ten years' lease. One of the advantages of this forest is its proximity to the mainland, whence, across a mile of fjord, come and go some of our largest stags for that range from winter to summer feed which is so necessary in order to maintain the quality and vigour of the stock.

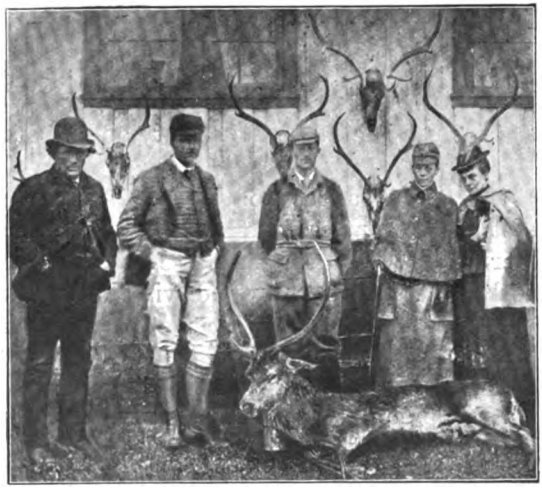
We usually kill about a stag a day to the party. In the autumn of 1895 our party of four rifles for a fortnight, and the writer alone for another fortnight, killed twenty-eight stags in twenty-seven days, partly stalking and partly driving. Several of the stags weighed over twenty stone, and one scaled no less than 386 lbs. (27 st. 12 lbs.), clean as brought in next day from the fjeld. His dimensions, which I took at the time, were as follows:—

		ft.	in.
Height:	From top of shoulder to centre of fore hoof .	4	3
Girth:	Behind shoulder	4	6
Length:	From centre of forehead (base of horns) along back to tip of tail	6	4

This is the heaviest stag I have known killed on the island. Hitteren heads are somewhat irregular in number of tines, being, in this respect, rather inferior to Scotch heads. We have killed many twenty-stone stags with heads of from seven to eleven points, and in some cases with switch horns—such stags, as all stalkers know, being often the heaviest beasts. Once only, in an experience extending over twenty-three years, have I killed or seen killed a full Hitteren royal, though I have been shown one or two fine royal heads shot elsewhere on the island. On our forest ten and eleven pointers have been fairly common. In beam and roughness of horn Hitteren heads are usually superior to Scotch.

Hitteren stalking is a somewhat different art from that of

Scotland. In the first place, it is woodland stalking, though occasionally I have enjoyed a stalk, after a spy a mile or so away, equal in duration, exercise, and excitement to anything that can be obtained in Glen Affaric, Athol, or Reay. Is it presumptuous here to remind the modern Scotch stalker that the red-deer is, the world over, by nature a woodland deer? The open deer-forest of Scotland, supplying though it does a manly, exhilarating, and often arduous form of sport, is, strictly speaking, an artificial creation. The Scotch deer do not, as a rule, frequent woods, because the old pine forests of Scotland have been mostly destroyed, and there are, generally speaking, no woods for them to frequent. Where woods of birch and pine still exist, in or near Scotch forests, in them will always be found for a good part of the year the largest, the heaviest, and the best conditioned stags. Some correspondence has lately appeared in the 'Field' on the subject of the decadence of Scotch heads. Whilst many causes may have combined to bring about this degeneracy of the modern Scotch red-deer head as compared with the noble antlers of a century or so ago, on all or any of which causes I should be sorry to dogmatise, yet I may in this connection venture to assert that in this change from woodland to open forest is to be found one great reason for the degeneracy of the modern wire-fenced, hay-in-winter-fed animal. Increase of numbers under artificial conditions, combined with restricted range, have no doubt told their tale, but deprive an animal intended by nature to harmonise with and shelter in a woodland country of his natural environment, and drive him perforce to the open hillside, where he can be constantly spied, harassed, and kept on the move, and where, moreover, the finest stag can always be picked out and marked down for slaughter, and you at once establish artificial conditions



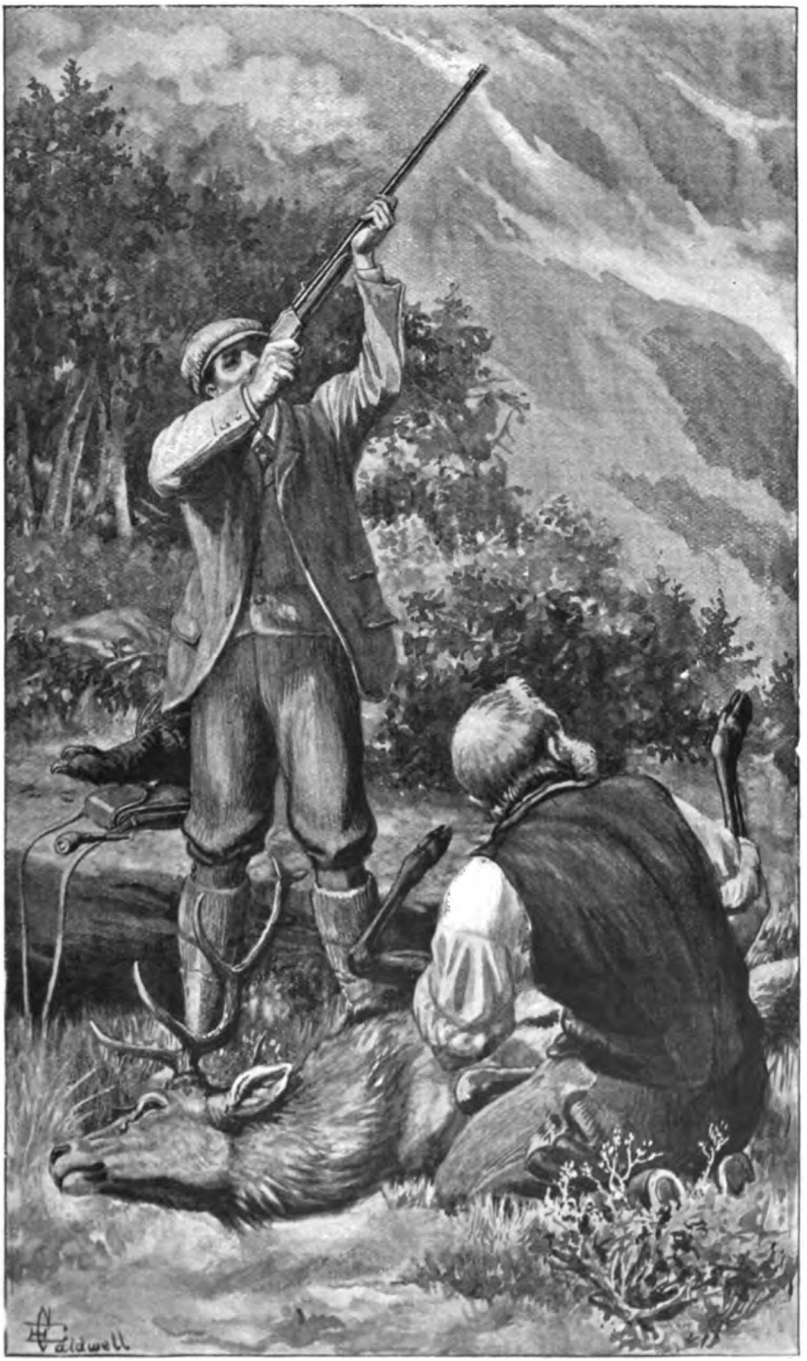
SOME HITTEREN TROPHIES

under which it seems to me the deer is bound to degenerate both in quality and size. As an instance of their natural liking for woodland country, the recent importation of red-deer into New Zealand may be mentioned. We are told that they have there at once taken naturally to the woods, and are growing splendid antlers.

Wood-crawling, then, is the chief characteristic of Hitteren stalking, and if the test of true sport is to outwit and slay a wild animal in its native home, then the stalking of which I write is sport of the truest and most natural description; and there is this additional inducement, that, in order to be thoroughly enjoyed and made the most of, it should be undertaken alone; or the sportsman should, at all events, be master of the stalk, and the deer once found, far or near, approach and shoot on his own responsibility, and not, like an obedient dog, crawl, ignorant of the science of the stalk, and the why and the wherefore of its details, at the heels of a professional native. Better far to bungle a few stalks and crawls on your own account, and learn by wholesome experience and a far-in-the-distance vanishing royal, to appreciate and overcome the practical difficulties of the sport, than be brought, automaton-like, within easy shot by a paid expert. Success in the former case is ten times sweeter when it comes. There are at least two good reasons why the amateur Hitteren stalker should, after he has acquired some knowledge of the ground, go alone. First, because a really scientific native stalker is the exception rather than the rule, and, secondly, because two men crawling like conspirators through wood and glen in search of a warrantable stag make at least double the noise of one, and the aforesaid stag is so much the less likely to be seen, or, if caught a glimpse of, to afford opportunity for a shot.

From early dawn until 9 A.M., and from 4 P.M. or so until dusk, are the proper times to find and kill a Hitteren stag. No one who has not tried it can realise the futility, as I may call it, of endeavouring to find and kill a woodland stag when couched. He usually lies, and the better the stag the more certain the rule, throughout the day generally between two winds, with a good view to leeward, at times chewing the cud, and with eye, ear, and nostril alive to every hostile approach or unusual sound. The odds are then all in his favour, and an inexperienced sportsman might walk through Hitteren woods for hours in the day without seeing a single deer, or knowing how many had seen, heard, or winded him and departed unobserved. The yellow-brown body harmonises so exactly with pine trees, yellow marsh and purple

heather, that even when on the move and feeding the deer is not so easily picked up, and when couched the difficulty is tenfold increased. I once happened to get my glass on a good stag as he stood on a wooded hill not half a mile away. As I watched him he lay down. My companion, an experienced native with a keener and more experienced sight than mine, not having seen him as he stood, was unable to pick him up, even with the glass, and doubted his existence until I propped my binocular on a stone with the stag in the centre of the focus and so enabled the man to see the exact spot. Some good sportsmen of my acquaintance, accustomed to Scotch stalking, have been occasionally disappointed in Hitteren sport, owing to this difficulty, where luck was against them, of finding good stags in such an up-and-down woodland country. The element of chance naturally plays a large part in woodland sport, as in some other affairs of life. We cannot reduce the pursuit of woodland game to an exact science, and probably would not if we could. Some days everything goes right, as on other days all goes wrong. My first shot on Hitteren with a twelve bore gun and charge of No. 6 shot brought down a magnificent golden eagle that, on our coming round a corner of the road, rose within point blank range from the carcass of a decayed sheep. Never since have I been so near an eagle, although these fine birds abound on the island, where I once saw eight of them, at a distance, sitting on one rock. Walking carelessly through Hitteren woods, I have occasionally and by chance jumped and killed a stag, when a strong wind and the nature of the ground happened to lend itself to the operation, after having, perhaps for days before, stalked favourite glens and corries without the chance of a shot. Twice have good stags been driven into my arms, so to speak, unwittingly by a comrade —without having been seen by him—when he and I were stalking neighbouring beats. On one of these occasions a friend was stalking along the side of our highest fjeld, a favourite beat. I was stalking a valley on the march, the other side of the same fjeld. Between us stretched at least a mile of open, heather-covered hill. Towards evening my stalker and I emerged from the pine woods on to the open fjeld—the valley was not a mile in length—without having seen a single deer. I paused, with a sigh, under the shelter of a rocky bank to hand the rifle to my native companion, light the pipe of consolation, and admire the view behind me, when the heavy breathing and the thud of an approaching deer became distinctly audible in the still evening air. The rifle was promptly thrust into my outstretched hand,



My third Shot

as the pipe and pouch fell unheeded to the ground, while over the ridge above me, distinct against the sunset sky, appeared a fine pair of branching antlers, and the next moment the splendid stag that carried them trotted by me within sixty yards. The rifle cracked, and after a mad rush down the hill over rolled the stag stone dead, with an express bullet through the heart. He had evidently been moved from the adjoining beat, and had taken straight over the fjeld. On returning home I found that my friend, although accompanied by an unusually good native stalker, had not seen the stag, and knew nothing of his existence. No doubt he had been lying down. All these are examples of the lucky incidents of sport which come to us all in turn and which add some fascination to its pursuit.

It once happened to the writer many years ago to kill, on a wooded Hitteren hillside, a cock capercailzie, a fine stag, and a white-tailed eagle with three consecutive shots of a single Henry rifle, all inside the space of ten minutes or less. At the risk of being thought a competitor for some sporting Ananias stakes I tell the story. It was blowing half-a-gale of wind, and, with an old native stalker, I had crawled through a mile or so of wooded hill, a favourite haunt of good stags, without seeing a deer. Presently through the trees I saw an old cock capercailzie on the ground, and could not refrain from the temptation of sending an express bullet through his body, an easy sixty yards shot. As we were advancing to pick him up I became aware of a fine stag galloping, from the next glade, disturbed by the shot, through the forest. He crossed a deep valley, and stood for a moment, broadside on at 150 yards, the other side. I had a good view of his shoulder through the trees, a fair though quick chance, and he dropped dead to the shot. Whilst smoking the pipe of satisfaction, my companion meanwhile gralloching the stag, overhead came sailing my last victim, a splendid white-tailed eagle, who poised a moment directly above us. A third lucky bullet broke his pinion bone, and after two or three wild gyrations in the air, the heavy bird fell headlong on a rock and we picked him up dead.

I have spoken of the native stalkers of Hitteren. None of them, so far as my experience goes, can compare for science and skill with the best Scotch stalkers. The most scientific Norwegian stalker I ever met, and a thoroughly accomplished and unscrupulous poacher, was a schoolmaster on the Island of Tusteren. This by the way. But many of the old Hitteren natives have served a long apprenticeship in wood-stalking with a 'gammel Norske rifler,' a ponderous muzzle-loading rifle of wondrous dimensions,

a marvel to see. Up to one hundred yards this weapon throws a heavy round bullet from a barrel five feet long or so with great accuracy. The native 'Norske Jager,' who seldom misses a standing chance at point-blank range, generally takes a rest on some moss-covered rock or bunch of heather. I know several Hitteren natives who tell me they have killed, in old times, their hundred deer. At a moving or running deer they never shoot. The Norske rifle is useless for the purpose. Occasionally they drove to passes, when the wily hunter would endeavour to stop the passing deer by a whistle or imitation bellow, and so get a standing shot. If this device failed, the trigger was not pressed. I shall never forget the contempt displayed many years ago by the Tusteren native hunters for my single ·500 bore Henry express rifle, the first some of them had ever seen. Alongside the 'gammel Norske rifler' it looked a mere toy. It was only by practical proof of its effect on the body of a stag and by showing its trajectory on the fjord that I finally succeeded in dispelling this contempt. The more experienced Hitteren native has the greatest respect for English express rifles, and the value of their handiness and low trajectory in the case of moving or running shots.

SCHOOLMASTER'S HOUSE, ISLAND OF TUSTEREN

A favourite native method of procedure is, at early dawn or in the evening, in the rutting season when stags are belling, to imitate the bellow of a stag. The better, and therefore more bellicose, the stag, the easier he falls a victim to this deception. I will not discuss the ethical question as to whether or not this is a depraved form of sport, and the perpetration of a low and shameful fraud on a noble animal. It is certainly practised in most woodland countries, and I have occasionally on Hitteren participated in and enjoyed the process. From a breeding point of view, moreover, it is obviously better to kill a master stag after, rather than before, the commencement of the rut.

Beguiled, possibly, to his death, he will, at all events, have first begotten his kind. In my opinion, if it is right to kill a stag at all, the hunter is justified in practising every form of deception in order to attain his end. A royal woodland stag is an exceedingly wily animal, well fitted by nature, and in his native country, to look after himself. Even in the rutting season he is difficult to get at, and generally comes round to get the wind of the belling sportsman, and seldom, if ever, rushes blindly on his fate. The ruse is most successful when it is nearly dark, and therefore most difficult to shoot. I once had three stags belling round me in answering chorus. It was only after the most careful manœuvring that I got a shot at dusk at the only one I saw, who had come round to get our wind. He happened to be a peculiarly light-coloured and very heavy stag, otherwise I could not have seen to shoot and kill him as I did. The natives are accustomed to kill their deer either in the latter days of August, when the long northern evenings give good opportunity of open stalking, or in the rutting season, when stags can be heard. They hold a theory that it is useless to stalk for a fortnight or so in September, when the days have shortened, and the stags have not commenced in love and war to roam, but rather spend the daytime lying in the thickest woods.

This brings me to an important variety of Hitteren sport, namely, deer-driving, which we practise mostly in September.

ARRIVAL OF A HITTEREN STAG

'This is not sport,' I think I hear some one say. My answer is, try it and see. By deer-driving I do not mean sending a yelling horde of men to try to drive the deer like so many sheep. As a matter of fact, deer cannot be driven like sheep, except with an army of men, and at the risk of completely ruining your ground. Deer-moving is a term that would better express my meaning. Five or six men are required

to go quietly through a mile or so of wooded hill and glen. They should all be experienced sportsmen, with some knowledge of the ground and the habits of the deer. The human voice should not be heard. A low whistle or a tap of tree is the best method of communication, in order that the men may keep their distance and line. The direction and strength of the wind and the nature of the ground must be carefully taken into account ere plans are laid and carried out. The rifles are placed in passes, or between lakes, and it is often no easy task to get them to their posts without moving deer back into the beat and so spoiling everything. Generally speaking, deer-driving requires careful planning, good generalship, and experienced execution; even then, unless luck be with you, the best-laid plans may all go wrong. A woodland stag is one of the most cunning and artful animals alive. He cannot be driven by noise, and frequently breaks back past the drivers, apparently warned by some mysterious instinct of a hidden danger in front. But if all is well arranged, and luck be with you, a master stag or two may trot or gallop through the trees, disturbed, but generally not seen by the men, past a rifle.

The opportunity thus given for a shot is occasionally easy, but more often difficult. Buck fever no doubt is a disturbing element. I defy any true son of Nimrod who has experienced those sensations to forget the pleasurable excitement, the quickened heart-beat that he felt at the approach of a warrantable Hitteren stag. He has sat, perchance, one fine September morning—and a fine day in the Throndhjem's Amt is worth living for—on some well-chosen bunch of heather amid a grove of pine. The murmuring trickle of the burn, the ripple of the lake on either hand, the mysterious gentle noises of a forest are all around him, and sound like music in his ears. The brilliantly enhanced colouring of dark green pine, of purple heather, blue lake and yellow marsh, lit up by a northern sun, and spread out before him like a picture, is a pleasure to behold. From half a mile in front of him runs back a well-known Hitteren fjeld, clothed around with dense woods, in which it is almost certain that one or two fine stags, at least, are taking their midday siesta. A quarter of a mile or so to the right and left are posted two brother riflemen, but out of sound and sight, and for the time he is absolutely alone. Across his knees, ready for instant use, lies his trusty double express, on the prompt and skilful handling of which so much depends. Let us here remark that it takes long experience of this variety of the sport to ensure successful results. Ensure did I say? It is too dogmatic a word. The results of a deer-driving shot can never

be ensured. It is an instinctive action with little time for thought. The moment at which to take the shot must be promptly seized. A few seconds' hesitation, a hasty or ill-timed movement, and the opportunity may be lost, and nothing but the track of a 'stor hjort' left to mark the event.

To return to our waiting Nimrod. Beyond the burn in front of him is a belt of wood, terminating in an open glade. Any stag crossing that glade will offer a fair chance of a shot at from 50 to 150 yards. On the other hand, if the deer take the edge of the lake on the right, they will be seen in the distance approaching, but the shot when they come will be a quick one, and if allowed to pass the burn, they will at once be out of sight behind a knoll, and must be intercepted. There is hardly a breath of wind, and it is most uncertain how they may come. There is yet a quarter of an hour for a pipe of expectation. The drivers are three miles away, and by the watch have only just started. Presently on the far skyline appears the tall form, apparent through the glass, of Nils, the head driver. The men are below and behind him. He is forward lest a cunning stag may break over the top of the fjeld. Now deer are on the move. Yes, here comes a hind and her family, a yearling and a calf, out of the belt, across the glade and over the burn, fortunately up wind, within thirty yards of the rifleman, who, sitting absolutely motionless, is not seen. The deer pass on out of the drive, and one danger is avoided. An incautious movement might have turned them back, and spoilt the chance of a following stag. Now in the main belt of woods that are being driven can be heard an occasional whistle from the advancing line. Black game are flying along the pine-tops, occasionally rocketing overhead, and two fine old capercailzie cocks from the highest wood sail majestically across the valley to a distant hill. See, here come three deer round the edge of the lake. Two surely are stags. They disappear in the belt opposite, and appear again suddenly, trotting hard, eighty yards or so to the right. Now for a stroke of genius. First comes the leading hind, then two eight-point stags. To take a shot at the first stag as they approach the burn is a quick business, and the second stag will turn back at once, spoil the rest of the drive and give no chance of a shot. Thus the desired right and left will not be obtained. Our canny sportsman therefore lets them cross the burn and disappear behind a hillock. The opposite hillside is steep. They are out of sight. He rises and goes stealthily to the brow behind him, just in time. The hind has passed, and the leading stag, seeing a grey shooting cap

rise over the ridge fifty yards to his right through the trees, stands for one second, and instantly an express bullet crashes through his ribs. Ten yards further and he was out of sight. The second stag dashes full gallop down the burn, but before he turned had shown his broadside in time for a quick second barrel. He disappears, and our sportsman returns quietly to his post, leaving one stag dead upon the ground and with, somehow, a feeling of confidence that when he pulled the second trigger there was hair on the foresight. Hardly is he seated when the whip-like crack of a new mannlicher rifle sounds across the lake. The clicking of the breech action is plainly audible, as three more shots from the post on his right follow in quick succession. Surely another stag has died. But now the drive must be nearly over. A driver emerges from under the hill, when suddenly the thud of a galloping deer is plainly audible, and the next moment a heavy stag, with lumbering gallop, dashes into view across the glade and to the left. It is a fair running chance at a hundred yards, and there is just time for two quick barrels. The second shot was certainly high and over, but how about the first? Down the hill he dashes and out of sight. The sportsman's heart sinks low, when a welcome splash sounds from the burn. He has fallen dead in a pool just out of sight, shot through the heart, a noble ten-point stag. In this case a cunning old stager had been outwitted. Disturbed by the drivers from under the fjeld on the left, he was coming on when the shots from two different directions, with their ringing echoes, had puzzled him. He had lain down, as a stag in doubt will always do, and, finally, seeing no deer turn back, had come forward just in front of the advancing drivers. A single returning deer would have effectually turned him back through the line. But now the drive is over. Two stags lie

A Day's Driving

dead by our sportsman's post. The line of the second stag fired at is cautiously followed. There he lies, stone dead. The express bullet had entered too far back, but raking forward had finished him within two hundred yards. Three stags at one butt. This is indeed a red-letter day. The drivers now gradually collect, and the party go round the lake to the mannlicher rifle post. A disconsolate 'Jager' is found. 'Yes, a splendid beast crossed the glen and gave me four shots, but has gone on.' Soon a blood trail is discovered. He was evidently hit. Fortunately a led Fin dog is one of the party, and is put on the trail, when half a mile away the stag is found lying dead. He proves to be the best stag of the season, with a wide and heavy head of eleven points. A single mannlicher bullet entering the haunch had raked him fore and aft, and the wonder was that he had gone so far. Four stags in a single drive is a record feat for Hitteren. 'Mange skut; meget morsomt jagt,' says Daniel the head stalker who posts the rifles, and we 'scole' all round. Everything to-day has gone right, as will sometimes happen, even in this uncertain world. Besides the deer killed, two good stags with some hinds had gone back over the fjeld, but they will do for another day. Only hinds and a nobber had passed the rifle on the left. Not the least enjoyable part of the day is the picnic in the heather by the lake, where the sportsmen 'fight their battles o'er again,' and the drivers jabber Norske and think of the fat ribs of venison that will shortly be distributed amongst them.

THE WILD GOATS OF THE CHEVIOTS

BY ABEL CHAPMAN

READERS who are conversant with the distribution of European quadrupeds will probably say at once: 'There are no wild goats on the Cheviots,' nor, for that matter, elsewhere in Great Britain. Now I am not going to assert that the Cheviot goats are the direct wild descendants of those which were originally dispersed from the region of Mount Ararat, and some of which continue to occupy the hills of Asia Minor in the splendid personality of *Capra Ægagrus*. But I do venture mildly to say that goats in a practically wild state roam, and have roamed for centuries, amidst the rocks and little-known recesses of 'Cheviots mountains' lone,' as well as (I believe) in the Highlands of Scotland and Wales. And the sufficient basis for that statement will be the undeniable fact that I have both seen them and shot one of them, as the following narrative will demonstrate.

At many of the different points of the Cheviot range at which, during the last twenty years, I have shot or rented shootings, I have come across these feral goats at intervals, or at least heard of their existence. I well remember my first interview with one in the spring of 1876. It was in a beautifully wild glen in the

hills behind the Simonside range in Northumberland. While endeavouring to discover the nesting-place of a pair of stock doves, which we had found breeding in a long range of crags, I came face to face, within thirty yards, of a superb old goat whose patriarchal age was attested by a hoary grey coat and a flowing beard, pure white, that reached below his knees. Some six months afterwards I was told by a shepherd that he had found the remains of the veteran lying dead not far from the same crags. He had probably died from old age, and my informant added that he had never seen but that one old ram in that neighbourhood.

A few years ago I rented some extensive tracts of grouse shooting in the vicinity of the great Cheviot. Upon one of these sheep farms was localised a little herd of seven goats, and their habits, movements, and the pretty spectacles they would occasionally afford interested me greatly. Once or twice each season, while grouse shooting, I fell in with these beasts, and each time noticed, with the glass, that the herd contained one magnificent old Billy. For hours I watched them through the binoculars—wasting precious time with the grouse—and resolved that one day that head should hang among my trophies. Now a goat cannot be killed with a gun, nor grouse with a rifle; hence the undertaking was postponed again and again till one January when circumstances induced me to visit the ground after the grouse season was over. I took a rifle and determined to make that goat a first object in life.

For the first day or two the weather was cold, wet, and stormy, heavy mists enveloped the hills, and nothing could be seen or done. On the third morning a change for the better occurred, sharp frost replacing rain, with a steely-blue sky that set off in fine relief the snow-streaked summits of Cheviot, Hedgehope, and the long Border range. Yet all that day I searched with spy-glass and rifle the favourite glens and corries where erewhiles we had seen the goats, without getting a glimpse of our friends. Every living object, when focussed with the glass, proved to be a sheep—there are many sheep on the Cheviots, but few goats.

Another stormy day followed, and it was curious to notice how the grouse, which, in the bright, cold sunshine of the previous day, had been comparatively tame, all paired, and, almost regardless of our presence, were now all at once re-united into packs, wild as in November. The hill partridge, on the other hand, remained wild enough, whether the weather was good or bad, while the old blackcocks had clearly no idea of the legal truce.

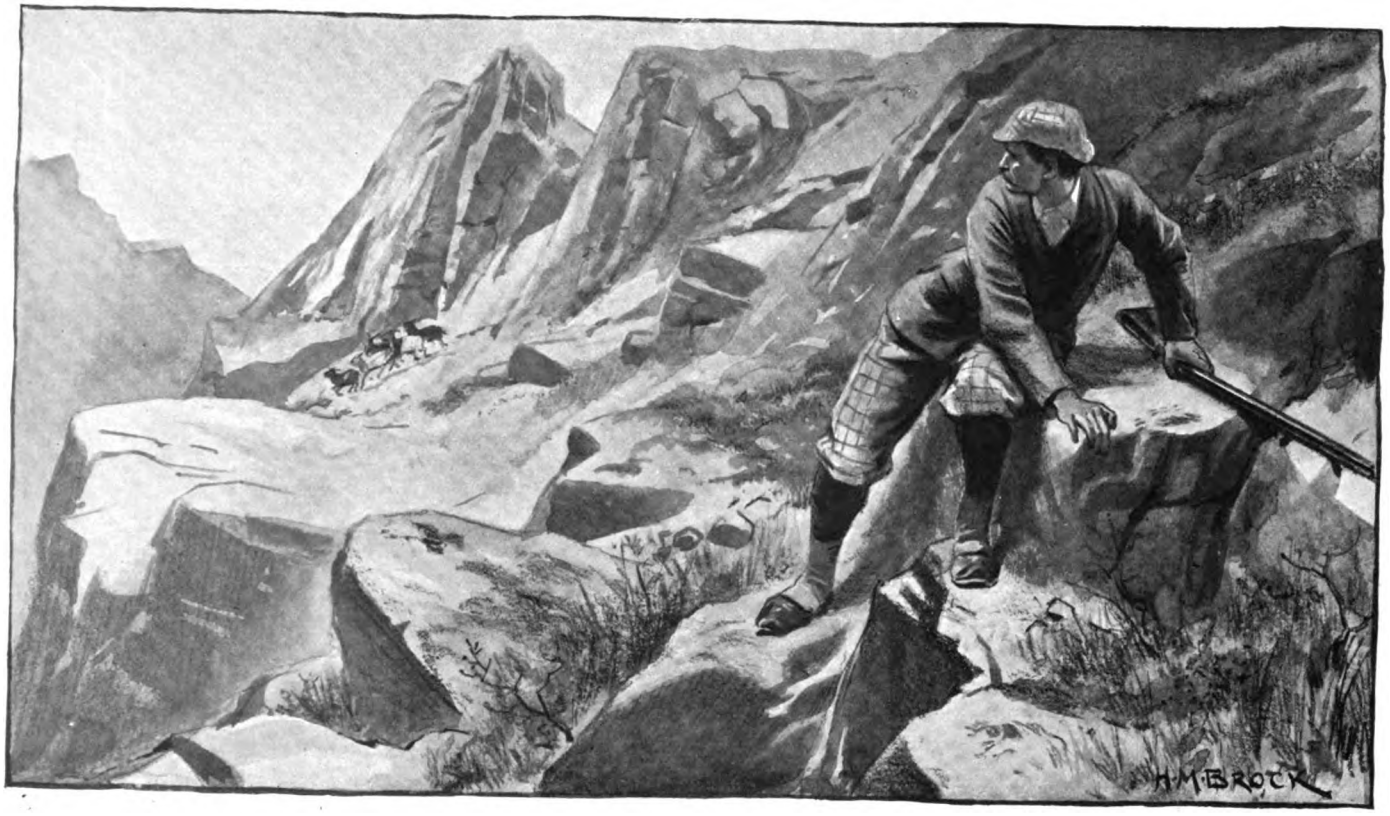
Again next morning I had drawn blank the favourite haunts

of the goats—not a beast in sight—and had almost abandoned hope and commenced to seek sport in other directions. Already we had broken a covey of partridge, and, moreover (the hounds having hunted the lower ground the day before), we had found some half-dozen hares high out on the stony tops, when, about eleven o'clock, we chanced to meet the rabbit-catcher, and hope revived. Yes, he had seen five goats that very morning at day-break, out beyond the Broadstruther burn. This we presently verified for ourselves and within an hour were lying in the heather, spying the five goats (including the big Billy) as they leisurely fed across a great bare shoulder a mile away, separated from us by a gorge yclept Skirl-naked.

The 'fire-hills,' or plutonic region, of the Cheviots proper present no advantage to the stalker. On the contrary, their smooth contour and great grassy slopes, unbroken, steep, and slippery, would often cheat his utmost skill were these hills (and I wish they were) tenanted by wild game instead of woolly sheep.

The goats in their then position being absolutely inaccessible, we decided to make an early lunch while watching—if necessary, all day—till they moved to more negotiable ground. Slowly they kept advancing towards the rocky gorge which we knew to be their favourite haunt. The near side of this was one great sheet of 'glidders' (or screes)—that is, loose stones and rocks piled up at the extreme angle of stability, and perhaps five hundred feet in height. These 'glidders' form the daily resting-place of numerous foxes; but so dangerous are they to traverse, so incoherent and unstable, that even the Border hunts, venturesome as they are, will not risk their hounds on ground that involves almost certain injury to many. The other face consisted of steep grassy slopes, slippery as ice, and in the keen frost rendered even harder to traverse, but broken at intervals by abrupt protruding stacks of grey-granite rock.

Presently I reckoned that the goats might be approached within shot from one of these projecting crags. After crossing the gorge and reaching the upper ridge, I found the distance to be quite three hundred yards, but the goats still fed nearer and I lay watching their movements. Unluckily, at this point, my companions (incredulous of the wild nature of our game, and thinking themselves far enough away) fired a shot on the other hill. Though more than a mile distant all five goats put up their heads, and after a single moment's gaze went off at speed. Running for two hundred yards, they then slackened down and *walked* out of sight over the sky-line. I could have cried with disappointment!



I SAW THE FIVE GOATS BOUNDING DOWN THE SLOPE

The day was lost—except for one bold course. The rabbit-catcher was close below me, and it flashed across my mind that that long-legged hillman, with his leathery lungs, might still head back those goats towards the refuge of their rocky ravine beyond us. It was a mere chance, but I risked it; and while he set off at top speed to the left, I made the best of my way scrambling along the frozen slope towards the right. I had only covered half my distance and was crossing a specially awkward bit, when a slight noise as of falling pebbles caught my ear. Luckily I was on 'all fours,' and remained so, for, looking round, I saw the five goats bounding down the slope not seventy yards behind. They were all in a clump, and though I could see the horns of the big Billy, a clear shot was impossible. On striking my trail they pulled up sharp for a moment; then, dashing across it, filed out into single line to take a rock-ledge just below. The old ram, halting to bring up the rearguard, disappeared last, and I risked a rather 'flukey' shot as he did so. There was no chance to see the result, but I ran forward hoping to cut off the goats as they emerged at the other end of the rock-stack, one hundred yards ahead. Arrived there, I saw the four smaller beasts skipping round the next crag. The big one was not to be seen—had the snap shot told? No, here he comes, tripping along the rocks below, but shaking his head in a peculiar fashion. He had quite twenty yards to go in full view; it was a 'shot to kill,' and I sat down, resting the rifle on my knee. The ball striking the root of the neck, the goat plunged forward, rolled a few yards down the slope and lay stiff, stuck at the verge of a sheer bit.

Before going down to him, I went back to examine the results of the first shot. There was a little blood, and I afterwards found the ball had struck his cheek, breaking the joint of the jaw, which explained the head-shaking. On returning, to my great surprise the dead goat was gone! There was, however, abundant blood-spoor, and, being unable to follow along the face, I kept along the ridge of the crag and soon came up with him, one hundred yards below, very sick and trailing his beard along the ground. A third shot, on the shoulder, dropped him again, but, being fired almost vertically,[1] struck an inch or so too low; and a fourth bullet was needed ere at length I seized this tough old ram by the

[1] The same cause also explains the goat's recovering after being struck full in the centre of the neck a fatal spot. In these 'plunging shots' from a height, one is rather apt to overlook the acuteness of the angle and to omit the slightly greater elevation that it necessitates. Nevertheless, the toughness of this old ram and the way he carried on after two such blows surprised me.

horns and dragged him out of a little burn into which he had rolled.

My old Billy was the *hairiest* beast I have ever shot, a voluminous *manchette* (there is no English word) hanging from the whole under-side of the neck and chest down to the knees. From either cheek sprang a hirsute moustache, while whiskers and beard were represented by three great masses of flowing hair, separate from, though apparently embedded in, the main *manchette* aforesaid. The beard, however (as well as a splash down the forehead), was white, the rest being glossy black, and a curious frontlet of curly white hair extended across the base of the horns.

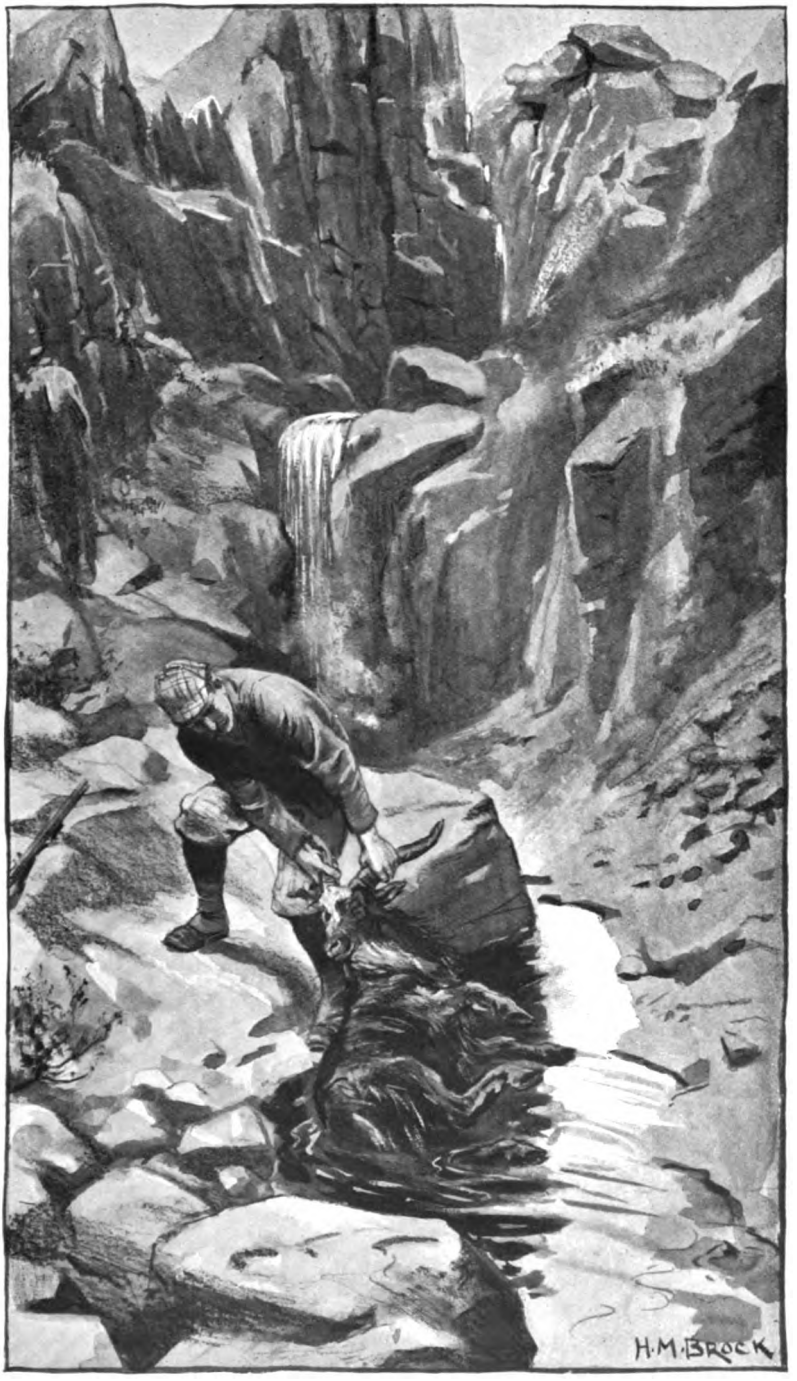
The latter measured nineteen inches in length, with a span from tip to tip of twenty-five inches, and a circumference of six. Another curious feature was presented by the hoofs. Owing to these goats frequenting soft ground (grass, heather, &c.) almost as much as their native rock, the horny outer shell had outgrown the solid substance of the hoof. The beast was thus walking on hollow 'stilts' nearly two inches in length. So tough and muscular was this old goat (which I understood had been known to the shepherds for upwards of twelve years) that it took me upwards of an hour, though provided with knife and hatchet, to remove his skin and cut off the head.

Three months later, in April, while fishing the burn below, I revisited the spot. Nothing then remained but the main skeleton —every bone picked clean by foxes and corbies. We saw on this occasion three goats, one a young ram with horns perhaps nine inches long—a pretty sight as they lay basking in the sunshine on a steep, heathery slope among the crags.

The actual scene of death chanced to be one of those rugged and romantic spots which one meets with scattered here and there along the Cheviot range. There are bigger rocks in the Besil, steeper screes in 'Henhole;' but no single corner will be found of wilder, more picturesque beauty than that rock-walled cleft, with its tumbling fosses and huge silvery icicles, that looks down upon Skirl-naked.

From a rough sketch made on the spot the annexed drawing has been faithfully executed.

So much from a purely sporting point of view. I now come to the really interesting question that underlies it all: How came these goats to roam at large on Cheviot or elsewhere? How is it in days of depressed agriculture and ever-falling markets that animals yielding no return in flesh or fleece to the flockmaster are granted free pasturage on the heathery hills? The answer



I SEIZED THE TOUGH OLD RAM BY THE HORNS AND DRAGGED HIM OUT

given by the shepherds is curious, and curiously unanimous: 'The goats earn their livelihood by *killing the adders!*' Whether this is so or not I cannot personally say; but among all the shepherds I have questioned, I have not met one who was not convinced of the fact of the mortal antipathy shown by goats to these reptiles, which they search out and slay by jumping upon them, all four feet together, as they lie coiled in the sun. Do the goats eat snake? No one can answer. Perhaps they do. If so, it might explain, in some degree, the strong personal aroma of an old Billy, which those of the Cheviots share (though nothing like so powerfully) with the ibex of the Caucasus and of the Spanish Cordilleras.

I have searched in vain through such books as I could think of to find some confirmatory evidence. None of the authorities allude to it. Bell and Lord Clermont are silent on the point, and the only corroborative testimony that suggests itself is in the native name of one of the grandest wild goats on earth—the 'markhoor' of the Himalayas (*Capra megaceros*), which name in the Hindustani tongue signifies 'snake-eater.'

HUNTING THE GIPSY

BY JOHN BEER

RUSSIAN COACHMAN, WINTER COSTUME

IT is a very cold day, very cold even for Moscow. The dismal winter sun sheds a coppery light over the frozen lake on the shores of which the Muscovites, covered from head to foot in furs, are now gathered in their thousands. The Governor-General is there. The surrounding streets are crowded with sleighs of all sizes and shapes, horses and drivers doomed there to await, during hours in the bitterly cold wind, the end of the sports that have brought this crowd together.

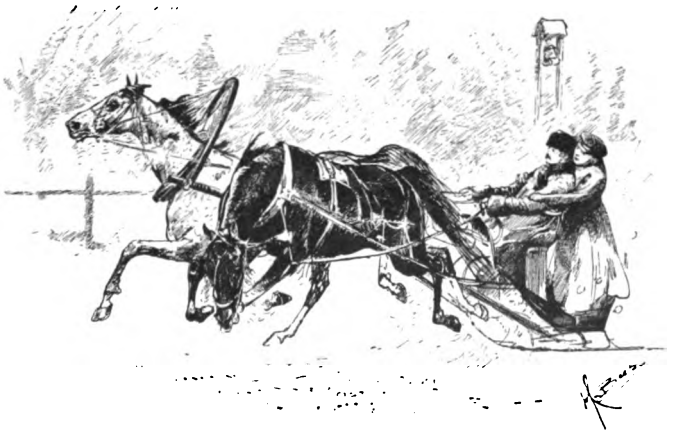
It is a racing day. The course is swept free from snow, and follows the wooded shores with red-painted railings on each side. On one side is a stand with seating room for several thousand people, and a special box with tent hangings for the Governor-General, surmounted by the Imperial eagle in gold. In front of this box, lower down, you see the prizes, consisting of gold and silver cups, vases, and ornamental pieces, all in Russian style and taste.

A bell rings; the course is cleared by mounted gendarmes; and now the competitors in due order take their places in front of the stand, but not side by side, as they always start from opposite sides of the course, with heads also turned in opposite directions. The usual racecourse hum and noise of the betting men are heard, and increase in volume as the bell rings the second time. They are off! and the fascination of rapid motion, open air, and strenuous

exertion throws its spell over the assembly, high and low, for trotting is certainly the most fashionable and beloved sport in Russia. You cannot recognise people just yet; the great fur collars are raised, and reach over the fur caps, leaving only red-tipped noses beneath which appear never-missing cigarettes. The ladies' heads are almost entirely covered by woollen wraps; so here again you can only guess who is who. To a stranger not investing his money in backing his opinion as to winners the game might seem monotonous enough, as the horses do not finish side by side, but in the way they started. Yet the Russians think differently—and, besides, is there not plenty of wodka and caviar to be had between the races?

Single horses are pitted against each other, drawing light little sleighs, in which the driver is seated very low down and far away from the horse, owing to the long shafts, intended to give the horse perfect freedom of action. A whip is not used, but on the reins are metal buckles over the quarters, which are employed instead, and almost all horses run without blinkers.

Sometimes a horse is attached to the sleigh on one side of the trotter, who is between the shafts; he is the pacemaker, and



SPECIALLY TRAINED TO CARRY HIS HEAD LOW

gallops the whole course, whereas, it need not be said, the trotter must not break. Then follow pair horses, harnessed as shown in one of the illustrations, and lastly troikas with three horses, sometimes four, abreast. Troikas are very barbarously gaudy and clumsy things to look at, but exceedingly comfortable all the same.

The great event of the day, however, was a race between a horse called Loutch, a dark brown, and another, a grey of nearly equal fame. The owner of Loutch was a millionaire who devoted himself to breeding and racing trotters, and his spacious town house contained, besides the usual cups and trophies of races won, a number of bronzes, portraits of his favourites, by the famous sculptor Lanceret, whose Russian groups were much admired

A HORSE RIDDEN ALONGSIDE AT A GALLOP

here by connoisseurs at the French Exhibition at Earl's Court a few years ago.

Before the race there was a rush down on the ice to view the famous crack that had beaten all comers. Good judges were highly pleased, and discussed his many points with extraordinary gusto. I could only see a coarse heavy head joined to a muscular heap of ugliness; but then I was at the time an ignoramus as regards the points of the Russian trotter.

Large sums were now staked; the hubbub in the ring and also

among the non-paying crowd on the bridge, overlooking the course, grew in intensity, and so the bell rang; the steel-shod, heavy hoofs scoop into the crisp, unyielding ice with tremendous force, throwing huge pieces of it high up in the sky, the steaming breath resembles a fleeting cloud enveloping head and shoulders, the flapping mane and forelock look like torn sails in a storm The rich long tail is carried majestically high. Several times the two came past the stand. At the last round the general excitement grew intense, and as Loutch at last passed the post

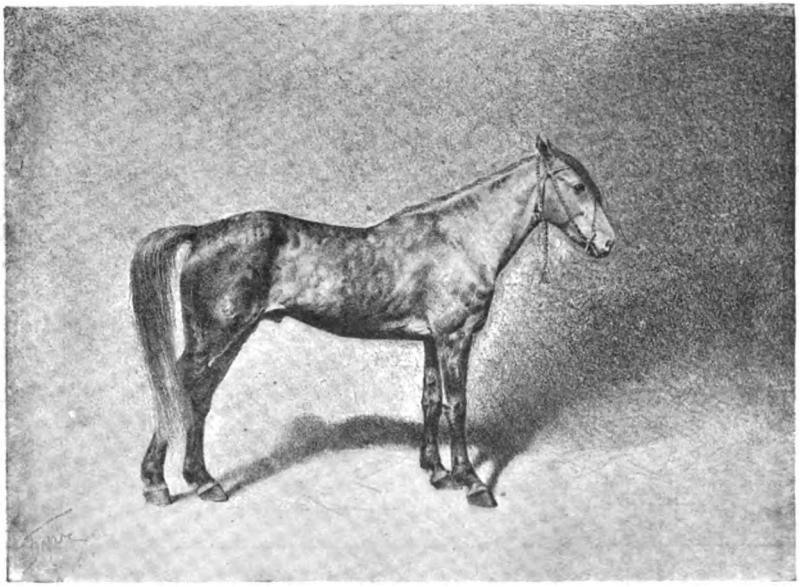
A Pair-horse Sleigh

a few seconds before his rival a hurricane of applause arose from near and far.

I was very pleased to have witnessed such a good race, but did not suspect that I should presently get to know both Loutch and his owner a great deal better. In the refreshment room, where I secured a seat near a stove, I had a good opportunity of seeing a number of the leading sportsmen of Moscow at close quarters, and noticed that some, the majority, looked highly pleased; others much less so—a very good index to which of them had backed the winner. I particularly observed two men who scarcely joined in the universal cheering as the owner of Loutch entered the room and invited the whole assembly to drink the horse's health in

unlimited champagne, as is the good old Russian fashion; their scowling looks and ill-concealed irritation showed too plainly that they wished the result of the race had been different.

As the bell rang again everyone resumed his seat outside, but I remained indoors to thaw up a little more. It was then I could not help overhearing part of the whispered conversation between these two men, of which one was the trainer of the grey, the other a gipsy of very unprepossessing appearance. The substance of the stray words that fell on my disinterested ears—words to which subsequent events gave a peculiar meaning—was that



FIRST-CLASS RUSSIAN TROTTER

Loutch would without fail win all next year's races of any value if nothing untoward happened to him—all the more deplorable as the trainer had a horse under his care that could not be beaten by any other animal in the country. The two hastily finished their drinks and their murmured conference. As they left I noticed that a bundle of bank notes passed from the trainer's pocket into the gipsy's ready hand, and they then joined the others on the stand.

It was in the following spring, while engaged on a portrait of Loutch—for an album just then about to be published with portraits of the foremost Russian trotters from the time of the Empress Catherine—that I made the acquaintance of his owner,

and accepted an invitation to spend a few weeks of the summer at his country seat, for the purpose of painting some of his favourite horses.

Soon after arriving I asked to be shown through the vast stables, situated close to the manor house, and as my host, the trainer, and I approached the entrance in one of the wings I noticed a white cloud of dust, and heard the thunder of horses' feet approaching us from the river-side. A great number of mares and foals came in sight, chased by two mounted country youths, who cracked their long whips from behind, setting the whole crowd of horses in a mad gallop, and scattering pigs, ducks, and fowls in all directions. This extraordinary treatment of valuable

I HEARD THE THUNDER OF HORSES' FEET

brood mares and foals evidently did not displease their proprietor, as he smiled complacently and observed to me, 'Russia is a grand country when you get to know it.'

The estate was on the famous black soil territory, where the crops are always incredibly bountiful and the vast expanse of flat fertile plains seems the most natural home and cradle of the horse. It caused me no surprise when one day the manager told me that, altogether, the number of horses on the estate was about five hundred, some, of course, used for agricultural purposes and general work.

A few steps from the mansion house lay the extensive stables which housed the trotters, as well as hacks and carriage horses, hunters, and others of every description, numbering in all about

two hundred. Where the rest of the horses were kept I never found out, nor did I care, as I had here the cream of the cream. Some were English thoroughbreds, some Arabs, some a particularly useful breed of the Caucasian, and some stallions and brood mares of the celebrated Orloff blood. In the centre of the stables was a circular arena where horses were exercised in winter or led out to be shown to visitors.

One day, sitting painting in this arena under my sketching umbrella, covered with a mosquito net trailing down on the ground as a protection against the flies, I could no longer endure the sight of the sufferings of the noble animal in front of me, jumping, kicking, and screaming with pain as the countless flies insisted upon their pound of flesh. (They had served me in the same way till I got that net.)

'Take Loutch back to the stable, Iwān,' I said to the handsome old man who had with great difficulty held him some time with his itching, fly-bitten hands. His grateful looks described only too plainly what he had so patiently endured. Just then the central doors opened, and the always noisy but thoroughly good-hearted and simple-mannered squire entered, followed by the ladies of the household, dressed in gorgeous Russian costumes (all colours), looking wonderfully fresh and cool under their parasols in the glaring shine and heat out of doors.

Besides my host's brother, a very stout and jovial person, the party included two officers of the Imperial Horse Guards—brothers—dressed coolly in white linen coats and white caps—a very elegant and smart uniform for the summer. They had just arrived from St. Petersburg and were owners of a neighbouring estate. Tables and chairs were brought in, with champagne likewise, and then the 'cracks' were trotted out and made to show off to best advantage.

'Oh,' said the hostess, looking at my easel, 'that is Loutch, the horse you were sketching as we came in; but how can you work at all in this terrible heat and with such restive models?'

'Well, you see, Mary Nikolaevna,' I replied, 'it is just exactly what I cannot do. What with your hot six-course suppers at eleven at night, and blind man's buff and other games up to two or three in the morning, I cannot begin my work as the sun rises, and must suffer for it all afterwards. However I have struck work for to-day.'

'Then,' she said, 'as soon as it is a bit cooler we will all take a ride, and I will show you a real gipsy camp in the neighbourhood.'

This proposal was unanimously acclaimed; but in any case the excursion would have taken place, as no one ever dreamed of opposing any of the whims of this very imperious chatelaine.

We were truly in the *country*—no towns within any number of miles, no neighbours to speak of, hardly any passable roads, only endless woods, a romantic river without boats or traffic of any kind; it all seemed a waste of beautiful scenery for want of human interest and activity.

After tea on the verandah facing the beautiful park, with its lawn and gloriously grouped old trees, we all made ready for the expedition, and the horses were led up to the front steps.

As we stood on the lordly terrace looking down on the winding river at our feet the squire pointed to the heights in front of us on the other shore, and said that on the summit of the furthest plateau was the ancient highroad to Kieff—one of the oldest roads in Russia—and that we should no doubt find the gipsy camp somewhere about there. Being the only foreigner present, I innocently observed that most likely they would be quartered near to some village or other. They all smiled at this remark, explaining that the Russian peasants would see that the wanderers did not encamp too near their abodes, for reasons of their own. So my surmise proved all wrong.

Squire Nikoshka—a name affectionately used by the squire's wife for Nicholas—led the way, and we were towed across the river on a ferry to the other shore, where a path led through the beautifully wooded slopes up to the Kieff road. Here we soon found the camp, with waggons, tents, circling blue smoke, dirty black-haired children, and all the familiar appurtenances of gipsies at home; but, unlike camps of their brotherhood in England, there was a seemingly endless stretch of uncultivated wild woodland scenery as a background.

As we neared the camp Mary Nikolaevna—whom I knew to be absurdly superstitious, as I had seen her turn deadly pale because a hare crossed her path in an afternoon ride—seemed to hesitate and wished to turn back.

'I am positive some old crony will insist on telling me my fortune, and I so dread any prediction of evil to come. I should never get it out of my mind,' she said.

Sure enough the old Sibyl was there, and to the front at once. She got hold of Mary Nikolaevna's trembling hand, said her prophecy, and pocketed her coin; but, judging from my hostess's happy smile when the ordeal was over, the old woman had known better than to scare her timid soul with evil predictions.

I had been sitting in the saddle, sketching, for some time during this episode before the band was aware of my doings; but the moment two very beautiful girls saw what I was about they hastened inside a tent, only to reappear doffed in some gayer coloured ribbons and other female adornments than I had noticed before. As if a bit of lead pencil could do justice to any colour, least of all that bloom on their youthful cheeks, that amber tint with the healthful rosy under-current of Oriental blood, those ultramarine blues on the jet black, waving hair, the coral beads round those healthy, well-formed necks! No, no, all that needs a well-furnished pallet and is too good for mere black and white.

With this exception no one of this roving tribe seemed in the least concerned about our presence, the chieftain speaking to

A Gipsy Troupe of Singers

our Crœsus in the way one king would to another, his guest. But he was not above accepting as a just tribute to his dignified position some coin of the realm, and indeed rather expected it at parting.

Out of such straggling companies are recruited those gipsy bands justly so famous throughout Russia for their singing and dancing. The Russians will never tire of listening to their wild and savage songs, male and female voices mingling with the sounds of the tambourine and the guitar. Many a Russian boyar or rich old man has called them in to play and sing to him in his dying hour, regardless of the cost and trouble incurred to secure this comfort, and many are the families of historic and aristocratic fame who have had to open their doors to admit the

gipsy singer as lawful mistress and head of the house. In such cases a considerable sum is paid to the chieftain of her tribe, as otherwise his permission is withheld, and no gipsy ever acts against his will.

Grateful for the diversion this visit had afforded from the monotony of our daily life, we returned to the house just in time to escape the total darkness which in these parts sets in most suddenly.

The following day at supper the manager rushed in with a surprising and alarming story. Loutch had in some unaccountable manner been lost. He had been out at pasture with some other horses after exercise in the morning. Whilst all sorts of attempted explanations were being suggested a servant entered and said a lad had just called to say he had heard a horse whinny in a certain wood some distance off, and that another boy had seen him at the same place, seemingly entangled in a bush; the latter had tried to find him, but failed owing to the darkness that came on.

It was now about midnight, and the moon had risen, shedding its magical light over river and wood; and as our officers were about to take leave for the night, promising to return next day, Mary Nikolaevna suddenly proposed a midnight drive for all of us, that we might search for the missing colt, and perhaps also for the purpose of enjoying still more of the gossip from St. Petersburg with which her officer guests were so well stocked.

A carriage somewhat resembling an Irish car, in which you sit with your backs to one another, and with three horses harnessed abreast, was soon got ready, and in this conveyance the ladies took their seats, we others mounting our saddle horses. The park gates were swung wide open, and the peaceful village outside the gates was startled out of its midnight slumbers by the tramp of our cavalcade and the tremendous blasts M. Wladimir (the host's brother) gave forth from his hunting horn, an instrument he sounded with more energy than art.

As soon as we had passed the village there lay in front of us miles upon miles of waving cornfields, framed on the river-side to our right with luxurious beechwoods. A great number of windmills stood silhouetted against the luminous sky, with their huge wings in total repose.

The carriage bells were jingling, the moonlight played on the silver-studded harness, our shadows jolted and jumped alongside of us as our united voices rose in disharmonious strains above the rattle of wheels and tramps of steel-shod hoofs: we were

trying to sing a Russian tune that was just then very popular. It all ended in laughter, and a merrier party than ours never existed as we approached the woods.

The description of the spot where the colt had been seen entangled was too minute to let anyone doubt finding him now that the moon gave sufficient light to enable us to see the objects about. The only danger was in the possibility of the poor beast having choked himself in his struggles to get free. As we helped the

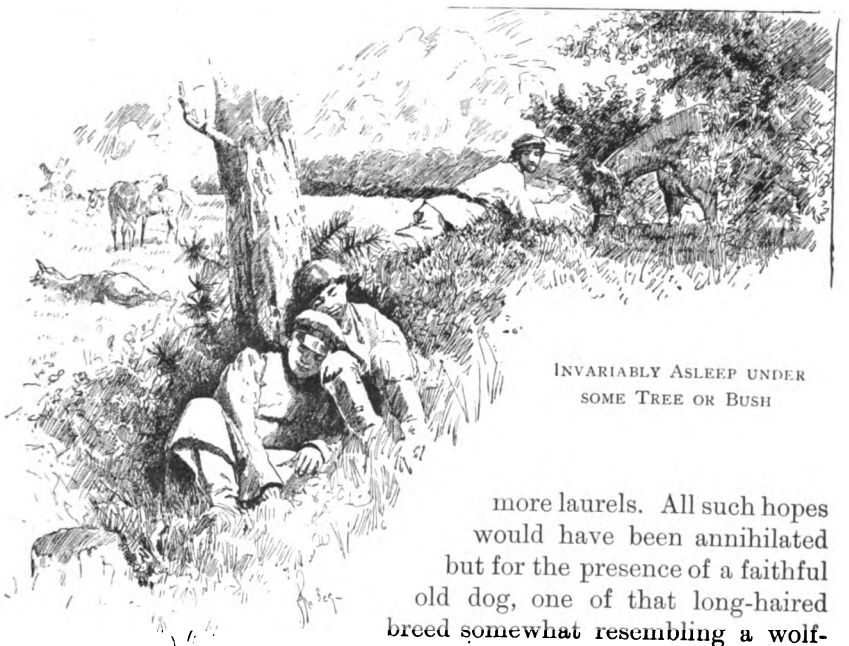
THE MOONLIGHT PLAYED ON THE SILVER STUDDED HARNESS

ladies out and led our horses towards the trees we quite expected to hear some joyful sound of recognition from the poor prisoner as his four-footed companion approached, but quite in vain.

'It must be here,' said the manager; 'not the least doubt of it!'

But all was still. The young trees and bushes were found, and on the bark the signs of a struggle were quite visible and fresh. We were now nonplussed.

Nikoshka vowed he would rather have lost a dozen other horses than this particular one, on whom many a bright hope was centred for the races at St. Petersburg next winter. In front of the Winter Palace, on the ice-bound waters of the broadest river in Europe, that is where he was expected to win



INVARIABLY ASLEEP UNDER SOME TREE OR BUSH

more laurels. All such hopes would have been annihilated but for the presence of a faithful old dog, one of that long-haired breed somewhat resembling a wolf-hound. We had already determined to give up the search. He had stood with wagging tail for some time, looking with his sagacious eyes at our perplexity, when all of a sudden he seemed to grasp what it was all about, and, sniffing the bushes, immediately set to work, like a Red Indian on the trail of his foe, moving determinedly in one direction—towards the river.

'Nom d'un tonnerre, boys,' shouted our stout M. Wladimir in his best French, 'I have it—the horse is stolen. Why, we have forgotten the gipsies!'

'Ah, but it's impossible; how would they dare, and how could they get him across the river? There is only our own ferry, and our men won't help the rascals; no indeed!' said Mary Nikolaevna.

I had now no difficulty in understanding how matters stood, as I had seen the lads, who were set to guard the better class horses when out in pasture, invariably asleep under some tree or bush.

It was now decided to send the ladies in the carriage towards the river, and we mounted, following the dog, who, without the least noise, steadily advanced in the same direction. When we had silently reached about half-way down to the water a warning whistle in imitation of some bird was sounded close to us, and was immediately answered from the shore. We had now no longer any doubt that we were on the right track, and so let our steeds know that we meant speed.

The treacherous light made this scampering among the trees a matter of some danger both to man and beast; at any rate my hat was brushed off by a branch, and, as I did not care to be left

DASHED HEADLONG INTO THE RIVER

behind, I gave it my blessing and proceeded to follow our leaders, the two officers. Our friend Wladimir stumbled with his horse into some hole, and both he and his mount rolled over and down an incline, he shouting with his mighty voice for us to stop. But the spirit of sport was upon us, and we dashed on heedless.

As we neared the shore there was plainly visible the silhouette of a man tugging with all his might to induce a horse to plunge into the shining stream. I also thought I saw a female form vanish in the undergrowth. Still approaching, we heard first the sound of one plunge, then of a second, and we could all see the

gipsy swimming by the side of the stolen horse, our brave dog following in his wake. The next minute the younger officer dashed headlong into the river, followed by his senior in a more dainty fashion; but as we came rushing on with the same intent our host interfered, and said he would not let us go into the river, as the chase would soon be over. We waited on the shore, chafing under this unexpected use of authority; but M. Wladimir, who now turned up with scarred features and various mud spots on his fastidious Parisian turn-out, though he used awful language in his native and more expressive tongue, seemed quite content to abide in comfortable ease the issue, now being settled on the other side of the river. We soon heard some terrible yells mingled with the sound of the thumping 'knout,' and shortly afterwards the two white coats glimmered through the willow branches, and three horses' heads were turned in our direction, carrying our victorious friends over the silent river.

By this time the ladies had found their way to our outpost, and came just in time to hear the description of the capture. The dog had held the gipsy at bay till the brothers arrived, and using their knouts paid him out in this Russian coin to the full. He yelled with pain, uttering hearty threats and curses between the blows.

Thus ended our adventure, or rather it wound up with a hurried visit to the house of the officers, who had hastened on before to change clothes and to prepare the salt and bread, which, according to old custom, is always tendered as a real Russian welcome. Salt and bread for custom's sake, and champagne for the thirsty throats!

As we returned homeward the moon was not so bright, the cheeriness not so general, and Mary Nikolaevna expressed her intention of sitting up all night, for fear the gipsies should set fire to the house and stables. Nothing would appease her fears till her husband promised to set a watch of twenty men at all approaches during the remainder of the night. Next day, when Wladimir and I visited the Kieff road, the gipsy camp had vanished.

FAVOURITE MEETS

BYRKLEY LODGE, BURTON-ON-TRENT

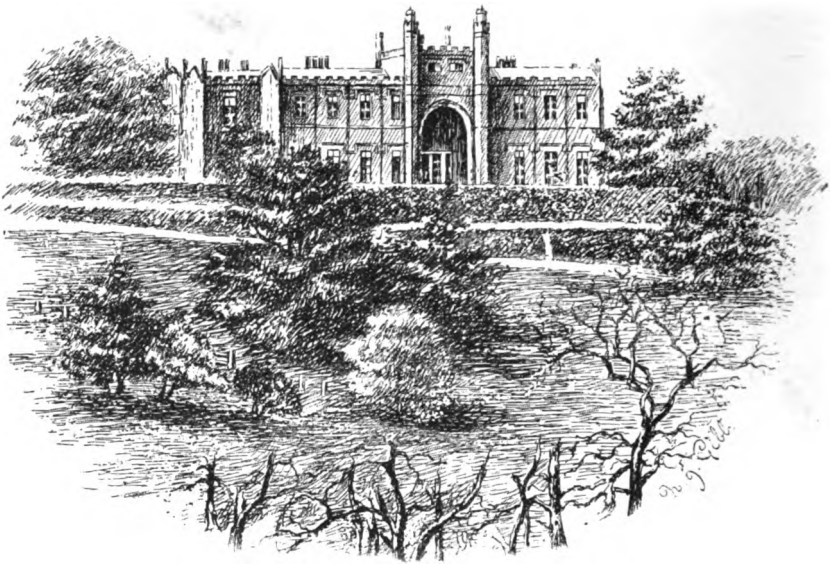
SEAT OF HAMAR BASS, ESQ., M.P., MASTER OF THE MEYNELL FOXHOUNDS. FIFTY-FIVE COUPLES OF HOUNDS; HUNTSMAN, CHARLES LEEDHAM; KENNELS, SUDBURY, DERBY; HUNTING DAYS, MONDAY, TUESDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY.

CAYNHAM COURT, LUDLOW

SEAT OF SIR WILLIAM MICHAEL CURTIS, BART., MASTER OF THE LUDLOW FOXHOUNDS. FORTY COUPLES OF HOUNDS; HUNTSMAN, THE MASTER; KENNELS, CAYNHAM, LUDLOW; HUNTING DAYS, TUESDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY.

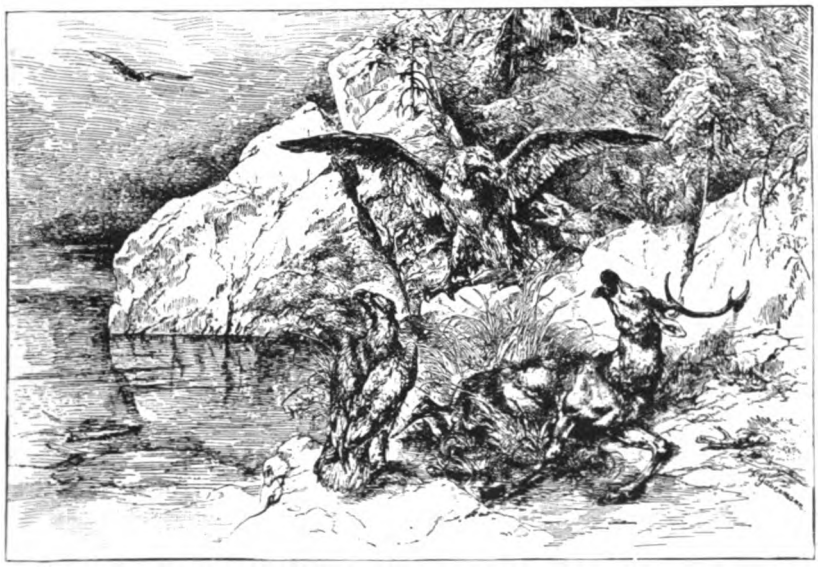
BOREATTON HALL, SHREWSBURY

SEAT OF ROWLAND HUNT, ESQ., MASTER OF THE WHEATLAND FOXHOUNDS. THIRTY-TWO COUPLES OF HOUNDS; HUNTSMAN, THE MASTER; KENNELS, HALFWAY HOUSE, BRIDGNORTH; HUNTING DAYS, TUESDAY AND FRIDAY.



PENTILLIE CASTLE

ONE OF THE SEATS OF WILLIAM CORYTON, ESQ., MASTER OF THE DARTMOOR FOX-HOUNDS. FIFTY COUPLES OF HOUNDS; HUNTSMAN, THE MASTER; KENNELS, IVYBRIDGE, SOUTH DEVON; HUNTING DAYS, MONDAY, TUESDAY, FRIDAY, AND SATURDAY.



NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

It will doubtless interest many of my readers to have a list of the game killed during the past season on a carefully managed estate in a district noted for the excellence of the shooting. The district is around Newmarket; the estate is Cheveley. In all there was twenty-three days' shooting there during the 1896–7 season, and here is a summary of the game-book:—

Pheasants	7,434
Partridges	4,286
Hares	2,711
Woodcocks	2
Various	55
	14,488

The absence of rabbits will be noted; but this is because the little creatures are so sedulously kept down that an incorrect impression would be conveyed if they were included—I mean they are not treated as objects of sport at Cheveley. An average of about seven a day is the number actually killed, and this is in contrast to the pheasants, partridges, and hares, and in fact that is almost precisely the figure—165 were shot in the twenty-

three days. At odd times Mr. Garrod, the agent, and officials of the estate, killed a certain quantity—about 500 head—not included in the total. The stock left for breeding purposes is very large. In one field last January I am sure there must have been at least 200 hares. The sight was wonderful; and the figures I give are an average derived from the separate estimate of eight practical and experienced men who watched the creatures as they moved before the beaters—moved chiefly to right and left, a very small proportion crossing the road and coming through the hedge behind which the guns were waiting for driven partridges. A good many of the 'Various' were pigeons; indeed I scarcely know what else are included.

A magazine, as a rule, does not have a 'policy,' and when an article is signed, as every article is here, I think most people understand that the writer is simply and solely giving his own private opinions I say this inasmuch as I have had the misfortune to bring down much wrath on my head because of a paper in a recent number by a well-known writer of books and essays on shooting. My contributor spoke with contumely of Birmingham-made guns, and several Birmingham gun-makers have protested with more or less vigour at what they declare to be an unjust aspersion. If their reading of the article in question be correct I have no doubt there is much justice in their declaration; but as I read the paper, it struck me that the condemnation was directed against the cheap guns which are turned out by some Birmingham firms for the sufficient reason that there is a demand for them, and not by any means against the best work of the best makers. A really good gun, one that will last for many years in the hands of an owner who fires thousands of cartridges every season, cannot be constructed by any maker for six or eight guineas, or less; and the average price of Birmingham guns is lower than of guns by reputable London manufacturers. Personally, I have no sort of doubt that some of the best Birmingham makers, when paid a fair price, manufacture guns quite as excellent as are obtainable in London or anywhere else; and, indeed, I see no reason for supposing the contrary. I cannot devote many pages of a magazine that is intended to be entertaining and amusing to technical matters, but I may return briefly to this subject next month, and meantime I hope this Note will soothe the not unreasonably wounded susceptibilities of gun-makers in Birmingham

I hoped to have seen Velasquez before writing my Notes this month, but have not been able to get to Newmarket, and must therefore trust to what appears to be the consensus of opinion—that Lord Rosebery's colt has not grown and furnished so much as his admirers hoped to find him. That fact—if indeed it be a fact—probably accounts for Vesuvian's advance in favour. As for the rivalry between Velasquez and Galtee More, I hold the Middle Park running to be all wrong, and believe that last year the former was a very long way the better of the pair. Take a line through Monterey. Twice the son of Goldfinch and Mutina ran against Velasquez, and the bearer of the rose and primrose hoops won without an effort; but Monterey made a vastly better fight with Galtee More at Doncaster; indeed at the distance in their race there was nothing in it. Before the Middle Park Plate I should have put Velasquez 10 lb. in front of Galtee More, who had run very moderately on several occasions, and that race did not much alter my opinion. We get something of a line between Velasquez and Vesuvian through Berzak. Velasquez beat the American colt at least as easily as did Vesuvian, and, moreover, when Berzak and Vesuvian met, the latter had an advantage in the weights. The idea is that Vesuvian was backward, and he may not have been quite at his best. I do not gather, however, that he was not very fairly fit, or that his stable ever had a very great opinion of him—that he is regarded at Kingsclere as distinctly a Derby horse. Everything seems to me to depend upon whether Velasquez has made liberal average improvement.

Good judges of steeplechasing have a strong belief in the chance of Stratocracy for the coming Grand National. We know that he can gallop, jump, and stay, because he won a four-mile 'chase at Punchestown; the Liverpool fences will not trouble him unduly, for he ran fourth in the Sefton, when, it is said, far from fit; and he was certainly 'going great guns' in the National Hunt last year when he ran into a doll and destroyed his chance. Five-year-olds have seldom won the National, it is true; I think only four altogether have done so since the race was originated in 1839: certainly there have been only four five-year-old winners since 1860, beyond which records immediately to my hand do not go:—Alcibiade, 11 st. 4 lb. (1865); Regal, 11 st. 3 lb. (1876); Austerlitz, 10 st. 8 lb. (1877); and Empress, 10 st. 7 lb. (1880). Stratocracy with 10 st. 6 lb. is therefore well handicapped. I rather like the

look of Nepcote (11 st. 3 lb.); if Lady Helen (10 st. 8 lb.) stands up, she will probably take a great deal of beating, as will Nelly Gray (11 st. 3 lb.); and the Soarer's friends are very hopeful that he will repeat his last year's victory. I am inclined to think that he owed his success in a very large measure to the fact that so many of his most dangerous opponents fell; still, horses that have won or run well over the course are to be much respected, and Wild Man from Borneo—the victor in 1895—is in the race with 11 st. 5 lb., a few pounds less than some of his friends expected. He 'stays for ever,' it is said, but I have no great fancy for him or for Father O'Flynn, though he has been both first and second. Opinions differ about Bevil, some critics of his gallops doubting whether he really stays, but I think he is developing into a really good horse. If Cloister were himself there is of course no saying what he might not do, but that he will reach the post in his old form can hardly be hoped. Norton (10 st. 7 lb.) is a good, honest horse that might plod on to victory, but he does not strike me as a very probable winner; the other Australian, Daimio, is an unknown quantity that must be chanced. Barcalwhey (10 st. 1 lb.) finished fourth last year, and is a likely animal to run into a place. Captain Bewicke used to think that this horse did not stay, but he has apparently developed stamina. I was told last year that if Gentle Ida ran she could scarcely be beaten, and danger might come from her or her stable companion Manifesto. If, by the way, Captain Bewicke rode Lady Helen I should be much inclined to fancy her, as he does more with her than anyone, though she ran badly with him at Sandown lately. It seems rather absurd to try to find the winner of the Grand National, seeing how comparatively large a proportion of the field meet with accidents, avoidable or unavoidable; but I lean to Stratocracy most, and think that Bevil, Nepcote, and Nelly Gray (if she is in the humour) have great chances.

I do really believe that the world in general is abandoning its faith in 'systems' at roulette. Idiots linger, of course, and always will; but during a recent visit to Monte Carlo I did not come across a single person who was foolish enough to imagine that by any system of play he could beat the tables. At roulette you win if you are lucky, but no careful calculation or prevision will enable you to win. And what luck some men have! One I watched on several occasions, and the ball seemed always to land where he wanted it to go. When some of us play, the ball always seems

to land on the next number to that for which we are trying. On a certain day the lucky player of whom I am speaking, after winning big stakes all over the board, had all the money that the regulations allow on '26' and around it. Up it came! He took the bundle of notes and pile of gold and left down his stake. Up it came again! Once more he was paid, the ball was spun, and the number for the third time was 26! That is something like luck! I do not think I have seen in print the story of the servant of a friend of mine, though the incident is a year old. This man put down a louis and waited results with a mixture of curiosity and confusion; for he had the vaguest possible notion of the game. The ball was spun, however, the result called, and such a pile of gold put to his louis that he dared not touch it, being unable to believe that it could all be intended for him. Consequently he left it all where it was, the game proceeded, and another pile of gold with a bundle of notes was added to the store. 'Are you not going to take it up?' an Englishman who happened to be next to him inquired. 'Is that all mine?' he asked. 'Why, of course it is!' was the reply, and the lucky valet collected close on to a thousand pounds.

No! To win by any system is absolutely impossible, and it is an excellent thing to recognise this. One can find many ways of playing which may yield favourable results for a time, but the luck changes—generally when one is playing higher than usual. A friend of mine, who knows the utter futility of systems as well as I, hit on a method which came out extraordinarily well. He had by him multitudes of cards on which he had marked down the numbers that had come up whilst he had been playing at different times, and going over these showed that the method—I will not say the system—would almost invariably have yielded a steady, though varying, profit. The idea is to play on the dozens, on each one four times consecutively, doubling losses. Thus you play for the first dozen, putting down, say, a louis. If you win, you take your two louis and put one on the second dozen. If, however, your louis on the first dozen is lost, you put down two; if that wins, you are three to the good, and you have finished with the first dozen for the time; if it loses, you have four down; and if *that* loses, eight. If the third stake wins, you are five to the good; if the fourth stake, you are nine in hand. If the first dozen has not turned up in four times, you start again with one louis; but as soon as you have won on the first dozen, you go on to the second, treat that in the same way, and then to the third.

Here is an example, taken at random from the first card I find :—

Playing for First Dozen

No. that came up	Loss	Win		
18	1	—		
35	2	—		
4	—	8	=	+ 5

Playing for Second Dozen

7	1	—		
15	—	4	=	+ 3

Playing for Third Dozen

18	1	—		
0	2	—		
23	4	—		
29	—	16	=	+ 9

Playing again for First Dozen

3	—	2	=	+ 2

Second Dozen

31	1	—		
28	2	—		
19	—	8	=	+ 5

Third Dozen

0	1	—		
4	2	—		
25	—	8	=	+ 5
				29

So it went on. We amused ourselves, as I have said, by trying what would have happened if we had played it with cards containing old results, and though at times there was a loss for six, seven, eight, and nine consecutive turns, the gain was curiously steady. One evening I played for a long time, not in this way, but on no set plan, keeping account, however, of what turned up. When I got home again, and we were chatting about the tables and their frequenters, it suddenly occurred to us to see what would have happened if I had adopted the scheme detailed. I should have lost ninety-seven louis!

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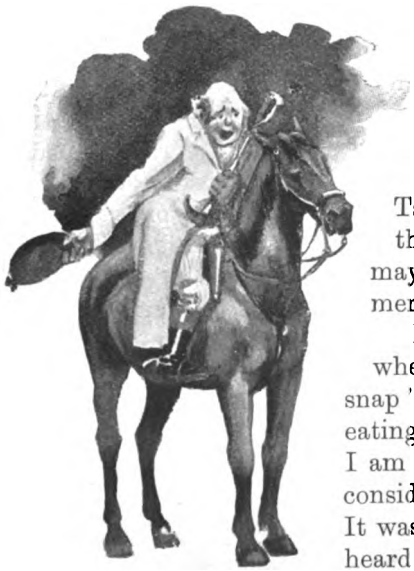
A GRAND FILLY

BY E. Œ. SOMERVILLE



I AM an Englishman. I say this without either truculence or vainglorying, rather with humility — a mere Englishman, who submits his Plain Tale from the Western Hills with the conviction that the Kelt who may read it will think him more mere than ever.

I was in Yorkshire last season when what is trivially called 'the cold snap' came upon us. I had five horses eating themselves silly all the time, and I am not going to speak of it. I don't consider it a subject to be treated lightly. It was in about the thickest of it that I heard from a man I know in Ireland. He is a little old horse-coping sportsman with a red face and iron-grey whiskers, who has kept hounds all his life; or, rather, he has always had hounds about, on much the same conditions that other men have rats. The rats are indubitably there, and feed themselves variously, and so do old

Robert Trinder's 'Rioters,' which is their *nom de guerre* in the County Corkerry (the few who know anything of the map of Ireland may possibly identify the two counties buried in this cryptogram).

I meet old Robert most years at the Dublin Horse Show, and every now and then he has sold me a pretty good horse, so when he wrote and renewed a standing invitation, assuring me that there was open weather, and that he had a grand four-year-old filly to sell, I took him at his word, and started at once. The journey lasted for twenty-eight hours, going hard all the time, and during the last three of them there were no foot-warmers and the cushions became like stones enveloped in mustard plasters. Old Trinder had not sent to the station for me, and it was pelting rain, so I had to drive seven miles in a thing that only exists south of Limerick Junction, and is called a 'jingle.' A jingle is a square box of painted canvas with no back to it, because, as was luminously explained to me, you must have some way to get into it, and I had to sit sideways in it, with my portmanteau bucking like a three-year-old on the seat opposite to me. It fell out on the road twice going uphill. After the second fall my hair tonic slowly oozed forth from the seams, and added a fresh ingredient to the smells of the grimy cushions and the damp hay that furnished the machine. My hair tonic costs eight-and-sixpence a bottle.

There is probably not in the United Kingdom a worse-planned entrance gate than Robert Trinder's. You come at it obliquely on the side of a crooked hill, squeeze between its low pillars with an inch to spare each side, and immediately drop down a yet steeper hill, which lasts for the best part of a quarter of a mile. The jingle went swooping and jerking down into the unknown, till, through the portholes on either side of the driver's legs, I saw Lisangle House. It had looked decidedly better in large red letters at the top of old Robert's notepaper than it did at the top of his lawn, being no more than a square yellow box of a house, that had been made a fool of by being promiscuously trimmed with battlements. Just as my jingle tilted me in backwards against the flight of steps, I heard through the open door a loud and piercing yell; following on it came the thunder of many feet, and the next instant a hound bolted down the steps with a large plucked turkey in its mouth. Close in its wake fled a brace of puppies, and behind them, variously armed, pursued what appeared to be the staff of Lisangle House. They went past me in full cry, leaving a general impression of dirty aprons, flying

hair, and onions, and I feel sure that there were bare feet somewhere in it. My carman leaped from his perch and joined in the chase, and the whole party swept from my astonished gaze round or into a clump of bushes. At this juncture I was not sorry to hear Robert Trinder's voice greeting me as if nothing unusual were occurring.

'Upon me honour, it's the Captain! You're welcome, sir, you're welcome! Come in, come in, don't mind the horse at all; he'll eat the grass there as he's done many a time before! When the gerr'ls have old Amazon cot they'll bring in your things.'

(Perhaps I ought to mention at once that Mr. Trinder belongs to the class who are known in Ireland as 'Half-sirs.' You couldn't say he was a gentleman, and he himself wouldn't have tried to say so. But, as a matter of fact, I have seen worse imitations.)

Robert was delighted to see me, and I had had a whisky-and-soda and been shown two or three more hound puppies before it occurred to him to introduce me to his aunt. I had not expected an aunt, as Robert is well on the heavenward side of sixty; but there she was: she made me think of a badly preserved Egyptian mummy with a brogue. I am always a little afraid of my hostess, but there was something about Robert's aunt that made me know I was a worm. She came down to dinner in a bonnet and black kid gloves—a circumstance that alone was awe-inspiring. She sat entrenched at the head of the table behind an enormous dish of thickly jacketed potatoes, and, though she scorned to speak to Robert or me, she kept up a sort of whispered wrangle with the parlour-maid all the time. The latter's red hair hung down over her shoulders—and at intervals over mine also—in horrible luxuriance, and recalled the leading figure in the pursuit of Amazon; there was, moreover, something about the heavy boots in which she tramped round the table that suggested that Amazon had sought sanctuary in the cowhouse. I have done some roughing it in my time, and I am not over-particular, but I admit that it was rather a shock to meet the turkey itself again, more especially as it was the sole item of the *menu*. There was no doubt of its identity, as it was short of a leg, and half the breast had been shaved away. The aunt must have read my thoughts in my face. She fixed her small implacable eyes on mine for one quelling instant, then she looked at Robert. Her nephew was obviously afraid to meet her eye; he coughed uneasily, and handed a surreptitious potato to the puppy who was sitting under his chair.

'This place is rotten with dogs,' said the aunt; with which announcement she retired from the conversation, and fell again to the slaughter of the parlour-maid. I timidly ate my portion of turkey and tried not to think about the cowhouse.

It rained all night. I could hear the water hammering into something that rang like a gong; and each time I rolled over in the musty trough of my feather-bed I fractiously asked myself why the mischief they had left the tap running all night. Next morning the matter was explained when, on demanding a bath, I was told that 'there wasn't but one in the house, and 'twas undher the rain-down. But sure ye can have it,' with which it was dragged in full of dirty water and flakes of whitewash, and when I got out of it I felt as if I had been through the Bankruptcy Court.

The day was windy and misty—a combination of weather possible only in Ireland—but there was no snow, and Robert Trinder, seated at breakfast in a purple-red hunting coat, dingy drab breeches, and woollen socks, assured me that it was turning out a grand morning.

I distinctly liked the looks of my mount when Jerry, the Whip, pulled her out of the stable for me. She was big and brown, with hindquarters that looked like jumping; she was also very dirty and obviously underfed. None the less she was lively enough, and justified Jerry's prediction that 'she'd be apt to shake a couple or three bucks out of herself when she'd see the hounds.' Old Robert was on an ugly brute of a yellow horse, rather like a big mule, who began the day by bucking out of the yard gate as if he had been trained by Buffalo Bill. It was at this juncture that I first really respected Robert Trinder; his retention of his seat was so unstudied, and his command of appropriate epithets so complete.

Jerry and the hounds awaited us on the road, the latter as mixed a party as I have ever come across. There were about fourteen couple in all, and they ranged in style from a short-legged black-and-tan harrier, who had undoubtedly had an uncle who was a dachshund, to a thing with a head like a greyhound, a snow-white body, and a feathered stern that would have been a credit to a setter. In between these extremes came several broken-haired Welshmen, some dilapidated 24-inch foxhounds, and a lot of pale-coloured hounds, whose general effect was that of the table-cloth on which we had eaten our breakfast that morning, being dirty white, covered with stains that looked like either tea or egg, or both.

'Them's the old Irish breed,' said Robert, as the yellow horse voluntarily stopped short to avoid stepping on one of them; 'there's no better. That Gaylass there would take a line up Patrick Street on a fair day, and you'd live and die seeing her kill rats.'

I am bound to say I thought it more likely that I should live to see her and some of her relations killing sheep, judging by their manners along the road; but we got to Letter crossroads at last with no more than an old hen and a wandering cur dog on our collective consciences. The road and its adjacent fences were thronged with foot people, mostly strapping young men and boys, in the white flannel coats and slouched felt hats that strike a stranger with their unusualness and picturesqueness.

'Do you ever have a row with Land Leaguers?' I asked, noting their sticks, while the warnings of a sentimental Radical friend as to the danger of encountering an infuriated Irish peasantry suddenly assumed plausibility.

'Land League? The dear help ye! Who'd be bothered with the Land League here?' said Robert, shoving the yellow horse into the crowd; 'let the hounds through, boys, can't ye? No, Captain, but 'tis Saint November's Day, as they call it, a great holiday, and there isn't a ruffian in the country but has come out with his blagyard dog to head the fox!'

A grin of guilt passed over the faces of the audience.

'There's plinty foxes in the hill, Mr. Thrinder,' shouted one of them; 'Dan Murphy says there isn't a morning but he'd see six or eight o' them hoppin' there.'

'Faith, 'tis thrue for you,' corroborated Dan Murphy. 'If ye had thim gethered in a quarther of ground and dhropped a pin from th' elements, 'twould reach one o' thim!'

(As a matter of fact, I haven't a notion what Mr. Murphy meant, but that is what he said, so I faithfully record it.)

The riders were farmers and men of Robert's own undetermined class, and there was hardly a horse out who was more than four years old, saving two or three who were nineteen. Robert pushed through them and turned up a bohireen—*i.e.* a narrow and incredibly badly made lane—and I presently heard him cheering the hounds into covert. As to that covert, imagine a hill that in any civilised country would be called a mountain: its nearer side a cliff, with just enough slope to give root-hold to giant furzebushes, its summit a series of rocky and boggy terraces, trending down at one end into a ravine, and at the other becoming merged in the depths of an aboriginal wood of low

scrubby oak trees. It seemed as feasible to ride a horse over it as over the roof of York Minster. I hadn't the vaguest idea what to do or where to go, and I clave to Jerry the Whip.

The hounds were scrambling like monkeys along the side of the hill; so were the country boys with their curs; old Trinder moved parallel with them along its base. Jerry galloped away to the ravine, and there dismounting, struggled up by zigzag cattle paths to the comparative levels of the summit. I did the same, and was pretty well blown by the time I got to the top, as the filly scorned the zigzags, and hauled me up as straight as she could go over the rocks and furzebushes. A few other fellows had followed us, and we all pursued on along the top of the hill.

Suddenly Jerry stopped short and held up his hand. A hound spoke below us, then another, and then came a holloa from Jerry that made the filly quiver all over. The fox had come up over the low fence that edged the cliff, and was running along the terrace in front of us. Old Robert below us—I could almost have chucked a stone on to him—gave an answering screech, and one by one the hounds fought their way up over the fence and went away on the line, throwing their tongues in a style that did one good to hear. Our only way ahead lay along a species of trench between the hill, on whose steep side we were standing, and the cliff fence. Jerry kicked the spurs into his good ugly little horse, and making him jump down into the trench, squeezed along it after the hounds. But the delay of waiting for them had got the filly's temper up. When I faced her at the trench she reared, and whirled round, and pranced backwards in, considering the circumstances, a highly discomposing way. The rest of the field crowded through the furze past me and down into the trench, and twice I thought the mare would land herself and me on top of one of them. I don't wonder she was frightened. I know I was. There was nothing between us and a hundred-foot drop but this narrow trench and a low, rotten fence, and the fool behaved as though she wanted to jump it all. I hope no one will ever erect an equestrian statue in my honour; now that I have experienced the sensation of ramping over nothing, I find I dislike it. I believe I might have been there now, but just then a couple of hounds came up, and before I knew what she was at, the filly had jumped down after them into the trench as if she had been doing it all her life. I was not long about picking the others up; the filly could gallop anyhow, and we thundered on over ground where, had I

been on foot, I should have liked a guide and an alpenstock. At intervals we jumped things made of sharp stones, and slates, and mud; I don't know whether they were banks or walls. Sometimes the horses changed feet on them, sometimes they flew the

WHEN I FACED HER AT THE TRENCH SHE REARED AND WHIRLED ROUND

whole affair, according to their individual judgment. Sometimes we were splashing over sedgy patches that looked and felt like buttered toast, sometimes floundering through stuff resembling an ill-made chocolate soufflé, whether intended for a ploughed

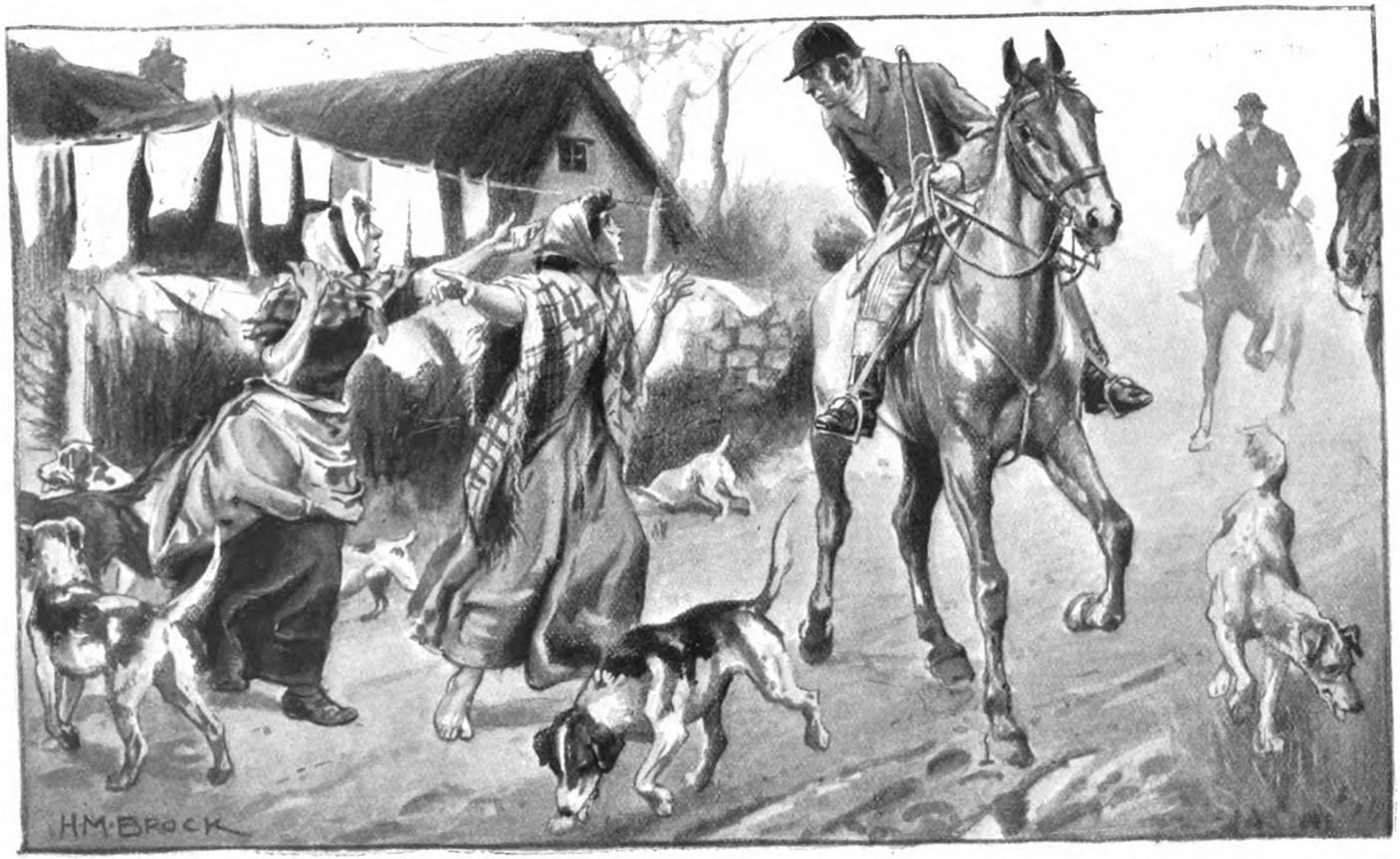
field or a partially-drained bog-hole I could not determine, and all was fenced as carefully as cricket-pitches. Presently the hounds took a swing to the left and over the edge of the hill again, and our leader Jerry turned sharp off after them, down a track that seemed to have been dug out of the face of the hill. I should have liked to get off and lead, but they did not give me time, and we suddenly found ourselves joined to Robert Trinder and his company of infantry, all going hard for the oak-wood that I mentioned before.

It was pretty to see the yellow horse jump. Nothing came amiss to him, and he didn't seem able to make a mistake. There was a stone stile out of a bohireen that stopped everyone, and he changed feet on the flag on top and went down by the steps on the other side. No one need believe this unless they like, but I saw him do it. The country boys were most exhilarating. How they got there I don't know, but they seemed to spring up before us wherever we went. They cheered every jump, they pulled away the astounding obstacles that served as gates (such as the end of an iron bedstead, a broken harrow, or a couple of cartwheels), and their power of seeing the fox through a stone wall or a hill could only be equalled by the Röntgen rays. We fought our way through the oak-wood, and out over a boggy bounds ditch into open country at last. The Rioters had come out of the wood on a screaming scent, and big and little were running together in a compact body, followed, like the tail of a kite, by a string of yapping country curs. The country was all grass, enchantingly green and springy; the jumps were big, yet not too big, and there were no two alike; the filly pulled hard, but not too hard, and she was jumping like a deer; I felt that all I had heard of Irish hunting had not been overstated.

We had been running for half an hour when we checked at a farmhouse; the yellow horse had been leading the hunt all the time, making a noise like a steam-engine, but perfectly undefeated, and our numbers were reduced to five. An old woman and a girl rushed out of the yard to meet us, screaming like seagulls.

'He's gone south this five minutes! I was out spreadin' clothes, and I seen him circling round the Kerry cow, and he as big as a man!' screamed the girl.

'He was, the thief!' yelled the old woman. 'I seen him firsht on the hill, cringeing behind a rock, and he hardly able to thrail the tail afther him!'



AN OLD WOMAN AND A GIRL RUSHED OUT, SCREAMING LIKE SEAGULLS

'Run now, like a good girl, and show me where did he cross the fence,' said old Robert, puffing and blowing, as with a purple face he hurried into the yard to collect the hounds, who, like practised foragers, had already overrun the farmhouse, as was evidenced by an indignant and shrieking flight of fowls through the open door.

The girl ran, snatching off her red plaid shawl as she went.

'Here's the shpot now!' she called out, flinging the shawl down on the fence; "here's the very way just that he wint! Go south to the gap; I'll pull the pole out for ye—this is a cross place.'

The hunt gratefully accepted her good offices. She tore the monstrous shaft of a cart out of a place that with it was impossible, and without it was a boggy scramble, and as we began to gallop again, I began to think there was a good deal to be said in favour of the New Woman.

I suppose we had had another quarter of an hour, when the mist, that had been hanging about all day, came down on us, and it was difficult to see more than a field ahead. We had got down on to lower ground, and we were in a sort of marshy hollow when we were confronted by the most serious obstacle of the day: a tall and obviously rotten bank clothed in briars, with sharp stones along its top, a wide ditch in front of it, and a disgustingly squashy take-off. Robert Trinder and the yellow horse held their course undaunted: the rest of the field turned as one man, and went for another way round—I, in my arrogance, followed the Master. The yellow horse rose out of the soft ground with quiet, indescribable ease, got a foothold on the side of the bank for his hind legs, and was away into the next field without pause or mistake.

'Go round, Captain!' shouted Trinder; 'it's a bad place!'

I hardly heard him; I was already putting the filly at it for the second time. It took about three minutes for her to convince me that she and Robert were right, and I was wrong, and by that time everybody was out of sight, swallowed up in the mist. I tried round after the others, and found their footmarks up a lane and across a field; a loose stone wall confronted me, and I rode at it confidently; but the filly, soured by our recent encounter, reared and would have none of it. I tried yet another way round, and put her at a moderate and seemingly innocuous bank, at which, with the contrariety of her sex, she rushed at a thousand miles an hour. It looked somehow as if there might be a bit of a drop,

but the filly had got her beastly blood up, and I have been in a better temper myself.

She rose to the jump when she was a good six feet from it. I knew she would not put an iron on it, and I sat down for the drop. It came with a vengeance. I had a glimpse of a thatched roof below me, and the next instant we were on it, or in it—I don't know which. It gave way with a crash of rafters, the mare's forelegs went in, and I was shot over her head, rolled over the edge of the roof, and fell on my face into a manure heap. A yell and a pig burst simultaneously from the door, a calf followed, and while I struggled up out of my oozy resting-place, I was aware of the filly's wild face staring from the door of the shed in which she so unexpectedly found herself. The broken reins trailed round her legs, she was panting and shivering, and blood was trickling down the white blaze on her nose. I got her out through the low doorway with a little coaxing, and for a moment hardly dared to examine as to the amount of damage done. She was covered with cobwebs and dirt out of the roof, and, as I led her forward, she went lame on one foreleg; but beyond this, and a good many scratches, there was nothing wrong. My own appearance need not here be dilated upon. I was cleaning off what they call in Ireland 'the biggest of the filth' with a bunch of heather, when from a cottage a little bit down the lane in which I was standing a small barelegged child emerged. It saw me, uttered one desperate howl, and fled back into the house. I abandoned my toilet and led the mare to the cottage door.

'Is anyone in?' I said to the house at large.

A fresh outburst of yells was the sole response; there was a pattering of bare feet, and somewhere in the smoky gloom a door slammed. It was clearly a case of 'Not at Home' in its conventional sense. I scribbled Robert Trinder's name on one of my visiting cards, laid it and half a sovereign on a table by the door, and started to make my way home.

The south of Ireland is singularly full of people. I do not believe you can go a quarter of a mile on any given road without meeting someone, and that someone is sure to be conversationally disposed and glad of the chance of answering questions. By dint of asking a good many, I eventually found myself on the high road, with five miles between me and Lisangle. The mare's lameness had nearly worn off, and she walked beside me like a dog. After all, I thought, I had had the best of the day, had come safely out of what might have been a nasty business, and was supplied with a story on which to dine out for the rest of my life.

My only anxiety was as to whether I could hope for a bath when I got in—a luxury that had been hideously converted by the locale of my fall into a necessity. I led the filly in the twilight down the dark Lisangle drive, feeling all the complacency of a man who

I HAD A GLIMPSE OF A THATCHED ROOF BELOW ME

knows he has gone well in a strange country, and was just at the turn to the yard when I came upon an extraordinary group. All the women of the household were there, gathered in a tight circle round some absorbing central fact; all were shrieking at the tops

of their voices, and the turkey cock in the yard gobbled in response to each shriek.

'Ma'am, ma'am!' I heard, 'ye'll pull the tail off him!'

'Twisht the tink-an now, Bridgie! Twisht it!'

'Holy Biddy! the masther'll kill us!'

What the deuce were they at? and what was a 'tink-an'? I dragged the filly nearer, and discovered that a hound puppy was the central point of the tumult, and was being contended for, like the body of Moses, by Miss Trinder and Bridgie the parlour-maid. Both were seated on the ground pulling at the puppy for all they were worth; Miss Trinder had him by the back of his neck and his tail, while Bridgie was dragging—what *was* she dragging at? Then I saw that the puppy's head was

jammed in a narrow-necked tin milk-can, and that, as things were going, he would wear it, like the Man in the Iron Mask, for the rest of his life.

The small, grim face of Robert's aunt was scarlet with exertion; her black bonnet had slipped off her head, and the thin grey hair that was ordinarily wound round her little skull as tightly as cotton on a reel was hanging in scanty wisps from its central knot; nevertheless, she was, metaphorically speaking, pulling Bridgie across the line every time. I gave the filly to one of the audience, and took Bridgie's place at the 'tink-an.' Miss Trinder and I put our backs into it, and suddenly I found myself flat on mine, with the 'tink-an' grasped in both hands above my head.

A composite whoop of triumph rose from the spectators, and

the filly rose with it. She went straight up on her hind legs, and the next instant she was away across the drive and into the adjoining field, and, considering all things, I don't blame her. We all ran after her. I led, and the various female retainers strung out after me like a flight of wildduck, uttering cries of various encouragement and consternation. Miss Trinder followed, silent and indomitable, at the heel of the hunt, and the released puppy, who had also harked in, could be heard throwing his tongue in the dusky shrubbery ahead of us. It was all exasperatingly absurd, as things seem to have a habit of being in Ireland. I never felt more like a fool in my life, and the bitterest part of it was that it was all I could do to keep ahead of Bridgie. As for the filly, she waited till we got near her, and then she jumped a five-foot coped wall into the road, fell, picked herself up, and clattered away into darkness. At this point I heard Robert's horn, and sundry confused shouts and sounds informed me that the filly had run into the hounds.

. . . . . .

She was found next day on the farm where she was bred, fifteen miles away. The farmer brought her back to Lisangle. She had injured three hounds, upset two old women and a donkey-cart, broken a gate, and finally, on arriving at the place of her birth, had, according to the farmer, 'fired the divil's pelt of a kick into her own mother's stomach.' Moreover, she 'hadn't as much sound skin on her as would bait a rat-trap'—I here quote Mr. Trinder—and she had fever in all her feet.

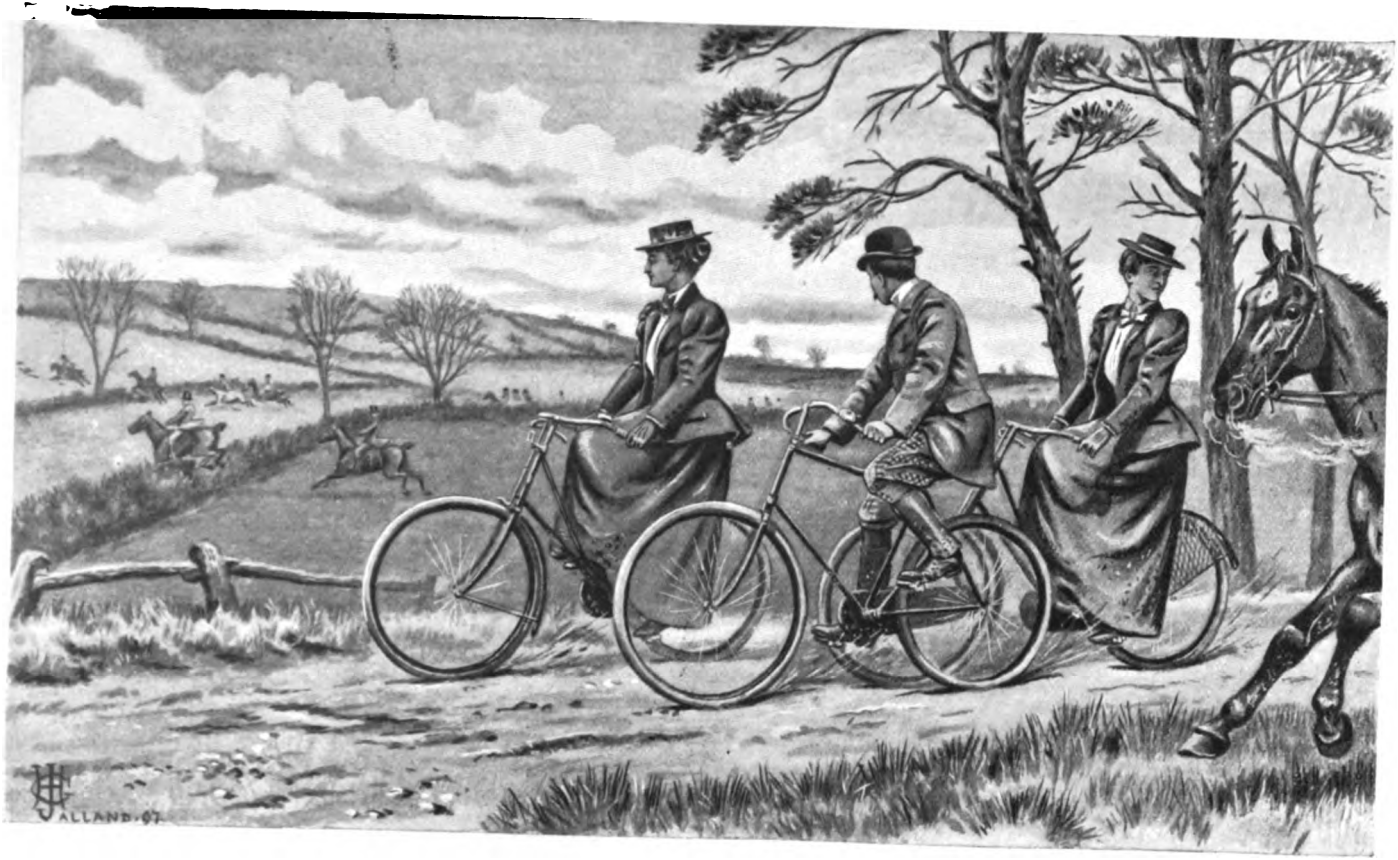
Of course I bought her. I could hardly do less. I told Robert he might give her to the hounds, but he sent her over to me in a couple of months as good as new, and I won the regimental steeplechase cup with her last April.

CYCLING WITH HOUNDS

BY FANNY J. ERSKINE

'IF you cannot get crumb, you had better eat crust'—so runs a wholesome old proverb; and, adopting it for service in these cycling days, there is a middle course open to those who cannot afford to ride, and do not care to follow on foot. Running with hounds is all very well for those indomitable persons who can face the sensation of finding themselves some seven or eight miles from home in open country, the hounds and field gone clean away, a stone or so of heavy clay on each boot, and the prospect of a steady plod homewards, with the excitement of the chase gone, and the weariness very much indeed remaining.

Now, how much or how little one sees on cycle-back with hounds largely depends on various circumstances. There are road-riders on horseback who hunt and talk, but do not go straight, or, indeed, ever jump anything bigger than a drain. There are cyclo-hunters who speed on gaily so long as the course is a turnpike road, but for cross-country cuts and fords or even level turf they have no inclination; they are of the kind who put the bicycle in a corner of a warm room and cover it with an embroidered dust sheet to keep it from dust or cold, to whom every splash of dirt is a defilement to be mourned over and a muddy road is the acme of all horrors. Cyclo-hunting is not for them. To see anything of the fun means, in the first place, absolute control over the wheels, ability to keep the machine upright in anything, be it



GET A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE WHOLE RUN

clay, mud, or frost-bound ruts, to crash over stones, rising in the saddle to break the jar to the machine, to enjoy the rush of the wheels over the high-backed, drained fields of the Midland counties, not to shirk a water splash, but to take all things possible, rough or smooth, turnpike or lane. Under these conditions a great deal can be done.

At almost every meet may now be seen a detachment of cyclists—that is, if the roads be moderately good and firm. It is of no use for the hardest road-rider to turn out when the surface is slippery, as it has been for the greater part of the passing season. It is dangerous to other people besides the rider to have a cycle slipping and wobbling about in front or amongst the legs of horses. The mounted members of the hunt have no wish to pound the offending cyclist under their hoofs, yet in greasy weather it is a downright impossibility for a cyclist to get ahead fast enough to make tolerably certain of evading danger.

On a dry morning matters are very different. It will always be found a good plan to keep an eye on second horsemen. Their standing orders are to be near the hunt, but on the roads, and thus they form a certain guide when one does not know the country; but the best way to see is to get on an upland road, parallel with the line, and then, keeping out of the traffic, obtain a bird's-eye view of the whole run. There is plenty of exciting work in this mode of action. For one thing, it is not easy to watch the chase and keep an eye on the road at the same time. It can be done, though it is not included in the cycling instruction of any professor. We may turn out and growl at the cold, the mud, stones and ruts, but once at the meet and fairly started, most people find riding at all sorts of obstacles on cycle-back is a mere bagatelle. The instinct most in evidence is a determination to *go*, as long as the rider can keep going.

The description of one run may serve for all. Runs vary in detail, of course, but the broad outlines are the same. A fine crisp morning; a blue haze hanging over the far distance, but in the nearer foreground everything bright and gay under a watery pale sun. The hounds are up, and are grouped round the wayside signpost, sitting and standing about, a parti-coloured, ever-moving crowd. Members of the Hunt in pink and black; grooms with their whips slung *en bandolier* over one shoulder to leave their hands free; ladies in tall hats—most workmanlike looking of headgear—or in the low-crowned bowler; a large sprinkling of men in cords and butcher boots, tweeds and gaiters; a horse-breaker or two schooling a young one (of whom the cyclists

had best beware, young ones having a trick of being handy with their heels), and a group of cyclists well in the rear. The more provident of these last are fully equipped with the same lunch case as their horsey brethren. Some who mean spending a day in the open have lamps and a local map to boot. So, a sparkling

A TIGHT FIT FOR TWO

fringe to the crowd, they stand at ease till the signal is given to start. On streams the train, reinforced by late comers who canter up behind, to the demoralisation of nervous cyclists; for, of all horrid things, hoofs in the rear are most unsteadying. At a gate a division takes place. The mounted section go to the border of the covert across the fields; the followers on wheels, propelled or drawn, stick to the road. The latter think they can 'go one better' and make for the high lands. A halt at the top to listen to the varied cries and whip cracks coming from the thicket below, as well as to get breath. Whilst glancing down, a long, low, red-brown fox, with drooping white-tagged brush, sneaks from the undergrowth, crossing the hill below; a boy sees him, and in a second a strident series of 'Gone aways!' wakes the echoes. A few seconds more and a pied hound springs head first into the lane followed by others, all in full cry. After them come figures in pink and black, then a surge of the field sweeps up the hill,

and away they all go through an opposite gate, helter-skelter up wind to the north. The cyclists have the whip-hand over the other followers here. The hill made most horses with traps behind them go slowly, and they are lumbering somewhere astern, whilst on the crest of the ridge the cyclists are spinning along, watching the run as it streams on below. This is cyclo-hunting in perfection—out of the press, seeing all that goes on, a sandy road so that there is no fear of side-slip, and a still morning, with just a puff or two of wind from the north-west.

But it is not in human calculations that things should always go so nicely on wheels. The line is swerving off to the west where the galloping is good, but where clay and water are plentiful. There is nothing for it but to fly down hill and hope for the best! It is a long hill—a steep hill. Moreover, there is a gleam of water at the bottom; but nearer inspection proves that it is only a small beek, and it is taken flying, the spray being

'CHECKMATE TO THE CYCLE'

churned up by the pedals, and splashing in crystal drops behind the back wheel.

The road steadily improves for the worse. It is just two parallel ruts filled with water and a rough water-patched hoof track. Thanks to this water, the going is not heavy, and after a bit the soil changes to gravel, when progress is again easy.

Diverging streams of hats show that a check has taken place; some stand about in the road comparing notes, and—for the run has occupied some time—having a sandwich whilst they may. The road is bestrewn with lunch case papers before the line is again hit off and the crowd vanish, leaving their paper only as a testimony together with the hoof-trodden ground that the hunt has passed this way.

On low-lying ground the cyclists are bothered. Somewhere in front lies a stream crossed by a foot-bridge and a ford, too deep for cycles. The run is evidently trending this way, and some venturesome ones embark on the rolling surface of a grass-field. Up and down they go, like a steamer in a gale, now hovering at the top of a rise, now squashing through a wet hollow, till the ford is reached. The bridge is one of those primitive timber ones, and proves a tight fit for the cycle, let alone the rider, to wriggle across—not to mention the minor fact of the structure being so crazy that it seems ten to one the whole thing will subside bodily.

Up again once more—hot, rather muddy, and damp, but as enthusiastic as ever. Hats are bobbing over a line of hedge in front, and the cycle swings over more and more rolling ground.

Checkmate as far as the cycle is concerned! The small tributary river is reached, a stream which local wisdom thinks too small to bridge, contenting itself with a line of stakes and a plank, which recent floods have swept away. This brook rolls sullenly in front. The hounds have swum across; many a habit skirt is wringing wet, many boots are washed clean, and one hunter is being rescued by a rope and sundry yokels, dripping. We must retrace our steps, and stick to the roads in future, leaving grass and fords in such weather to the horsemen. But we have outdistanced the foot contingent, we have had a good run, and now the sun is beginning its downward journey, sinking into a bank of fog rising from the swampy soil. We will spin home to tea, to dry things, and the intense feeling of happiness which often results from a day on cycle-back with the hounds.

CRUISING IN SMALL CRAFT

BY SURGEON-MAJOR C. M. DOUGLAS, V.C.

THE charm of the small craft is the opportunity it gives for independent travel. It is not the lot of everyone to go to Corinth, nor to cruise in a well-appointed yacht, sail or steam. The canoe, the small single-handed yacht, or the combination row and sail boat, is within the reach of most people who desire to see a little of the picturesque and interesting parts of a country without the necessity of travelling in the company of a herd of their fellow-creatures, sticking to certain lines of travel, arriving and leaving at fixed times, whether it suits them or not.

The canoe, it is needless to say, is not so popular as the bicycle. It is much slower; the would-be cruiser must possess aquatic taste, with a love for streams and rivers, lakes or fiords, and take delight in the exercise and excitement of paddling and sailing his little craft upon them. It does not offer a very wide range of choice of routes. Water communications must be adhered to. All rivers are not navigable (even for a canoe) in all parts of their course, and a cruise which may look feasible and pleasant on a map may be found very hard in reality—a cause of much anguish of body and mind to the canoeist as he grinds the bottom of his boat over shallows, toils to carry it round impracticable rapids, or runs the risk of knocking a hole through it in attempting to shoot them.

On the other hand, one great point in its favour: no canoeist that I have met ever attempted to make a record. He does not rush violently down and up inclines, with set and anxious face

and rigid arms, his knees working with violent spasms, his spine curved over his steering bar, much in the same attitude as the pilgrim feelingly described by Peter Pindar, who had omitted to boil his peas just before setting out on his journey.

That there are canoeists whose main object is to see how many miles they can paddle or sail in a day is no doubt a fact. Robert Louis Stevenson, in his 'Inland Voyage,' mentions having had a narrow escape of following in the wake of a champion canoe paddler. But happily such are rare. The canoe enables the independent traveller to explore odd nooks and corners; he can be careless of inns if he has a mind for roughing it and for following the examples of Thoreau and Tolstoi. He has sufficient exercise and mild excitement to prevent his voyage becoming monotonous, and he can house his little craft and leave it with an easy mind as to the condition he will find it in when he returns. The canoe and outfit should be of the simplest description. The paddle plays the star part on a canoe cruise, the sail that of second fiddle—that is on river cruising, and the main object of the canoe is for cruising on waters difficult of navigation or of access in ordinary boats. It should be sufficiently portable to be easily carried round obstacles or stowed in a railway truck. The desire to make the wind the chief propelling power of a canoe is strong in the human aquatic heart, and various sailing canoes have been designed. I am not aware that there is any record of a cruise (worth calling such) having been made in one of these craft that might not have been made more easily in a larger boat. 'He called himself champion canoe sailor,' I overheard one yacht hand observe to another on board a Cowes steamer, 'and as fast as ever came a puff over he'd go.' This about sizes the sailing-racing canoe.

The independent traveller who is fond of sailing, and can so arrange his cruise that he has not to carry his boat round obstacles, will find the combination row and sail skiff, or the canoe yawl, better suited to his wants. Of these there are many varieties, from the humble open skiff, with or without a centre-board, rigged with a plain lug sail or sprit mainsail and foresail, to the elaborate canoe yawl, fitted with various dodges, more or less decked, which sails much better than the first-mentioned skiff, and is a better sea boat, but is harder to row, not so easy to handle, and more costly to build. Another form of single-hander is the small sailing yacht, often a very complete little ship, designed especially for sailing on the open sea or on large lakes. In this sail is the propelling power, and to it all other qualities are

subservient. Unless sailed, or towed, it usually remains on the waters on which it is launched. It is not easy to transship by rail or by steam vessel; so the cruising is chiefly confined to home waters, unless the owner is one of those bold navigators who make long voyages and cross wide seas in small boats.

MODE OF CARRYING A CANOE ROUND A RAPID OR FALL

Much more attention has been paid to these vessels of late years, and in the matter of rig, cabin accommodation, and handiness, very complete little yachts are turned out. Rather a light draft, with not too deep 'keel' or centre-board, considerable

buoyancy, handy rig, and small sail plan, are considered essentials in a boat of this kind.

Many successful cruises in small craft are recorded. Considering the number of its votaries, the literature of this kind of independent travelling compares favourably with others. Thoreau's record of a 'Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers' is one of the earliest accounts of a cruise in a small craft for pleasure that have been published. This man of nature, as may be imagined, did not trouble himself much about his boat and outfit. The former was a 'dory,' a sort of flat-bottomed primitive boat common to many nations. It carried wheels for rolling it round falls, was provided with a tent and buffalo robe for shelter, and coverings at night; a few utensils for cooking; and, for food, chiefly melons and potatoes, with a little rice. His cruise was a comparatively short one, neither the Concord nor the Merrimac being a river of the first magnitude in that country of big things.

Some time in the 'forties a cruise for pleasure was made on the larger rivers of the Continent, one year in a four-oar, the next in a pair. An account of these expeditions, probably the first of the kind published in England, was given in a book called the 'Log of the Water Lily.' Mr. 'Rob Roy' Macgregor Campbell's books gave a great impetus to this mode of independent travelling, both in England and America. In the latter country Mr. N. H. Bishop made a voyage in a paper canoe from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, down the Hudson river, and along a series of lagoons or sheltered bays as far as Florida, and then down the Suanee river (celebrated in song) to the Gulf. He made another long cruise down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans, in a modified duck punt, known by the name of a 'sneak box,' spoon-bowed, and square-sterned like a Chinese sampan, but decked. It was about 12 ft. long and 4 wide, fitted with sails and sculls. Mr. Bishop made this little ship his home for some months. His experiences when jammed amidst floating ice in the Ohio and unable to reach shore for some days were rather thrilling.

Mr. McMullen was one of the most successful and enthusiastic of British cruisers in small craft. In the year of the Queen's Jubilee he sailed round England, Scotland, and Ireland in a small yacht. Mr. McMullen, I believe, followed the example of the old Norse Vikings in making a funeral barge of his yacht, having been found dead in it. Many later cruises have been made on the rivers and canals of Great Britain and the Continent, and some very good little books, notably the 'Inland Voyage' of R. L. Stevenson, have been the result.

The voyages that have been made across the Atlantic in small craft have been in the nature of feats undertaken with some other object than love of the sea and independent cruising, and the boats have been specially designed and constructed. I once met one of these men who seemed to earn a precarious livelihood by crossing the Atlantic in small boats. He had recently made a voyage from Cuba to Palos in Spain in the interest of a patent soap company, and the beautifully executed fresco of his boat and himself tossed by the Atlantic waves, with the figure of a woman bending over a wash-tub, using the aforesaid soap, in the foreground, attracted a great deal of attention at the Columbian Exhibition of 1893. His boat, which was also on view, was 14 ft. long by 5 ft. beam, and, as far as I could judge, about 2 ft. 4 or 6 in. deep at midships; but it was a capacious boat for these dimensions. It was flat-bottomed and sided like a punt drawn in at the ends—a sort of dory or sharpie decked all over with the exception of a cockpit, in which the solitary navigator reclined, and over which he could, if required, draw a sliding hatch. It was provided with a heavy iron keel, and was sloop-rigged, with a modified sliding gunter, mainsail and jib. Thus the boat, unless very severely treated, was unsinkable and very difficult to capsize, offering but little resistance to the waves. His food and drink were within easy reach; when he wished to sleep he jammed his tiller into one of the notches of a comb at the back of the cockpit, so that the boat should not get much out of its course; the sails were so well balanced that his ship carried little helm either way, and, with a steady breeze, he could take a caulk and rest with an easy mind. Still, in spite of these little comforts, an Atlantic voyage in a small boat must be rather a trial to the fortitude of the solitary navigator.

> Alone, alone, all, all alone,
> Alone on a wide wide sea

for more than two months, one would think, would be more than sufficient for the most enthusiastic lover of the ocean. Two Fins have recently rowed across the Atlantic in a skiff, 18 ft. long, fitted with air-tight compartments—certainly a very remarkable feat. They were upset somewhere on the banks of Newfoundland, but managed to right their boat and continue their voyage. At the present time a Captain Slocum is circumnavigating the world alone in a small yacht of about 18 tons, and had cruised successfully through the Mediterranean when last heard of. I trust he will be more successful than a would-be circumnavigator with

whom I once had a little correspondence. He wrote to me from Florida, saying he was about to go round the world in a little centre-board sloop some 20 ft. in length by 6 ft. beam, and asked me to help him by giving him a folding dinghy. This tempting opportunity of letting a folding dinghy see the world was declined. Some time after I met a friend who had lately returned from Florida, and had come across the enterprising navigator. I inquired what he was like. 'Well,' said my friend, 'he asked me what all the little figures on the chart were, round the coast line.' It rather puzzled my friend to find that this would-be circumnavigator of the earth did not know how the soundings were marked, and he predicted a short voyage. In this he was right. The little sloop got round some sixty miles of Florida coast, was then wrecked near the entrance to a river, and abandoned by the navigator, who disappeared. That he was not drowned was probably due to an oversight on the part of the little cherub who lives up aloft, who mistook him for a regular sailor, and watched over him accordingly.

Some single-handed cruises I have made may be worth recounting. Shall I ever forget how I once attempted to go down a considerable part of the river Godavery in Central India in a cat-rigged centre-board sailing boat, partly decked, about 14 ft. long by 6 ft. beam—as ill adapted for the work as a boat could possibly be? With much toil and worry I had this boat conveyed some two hundred miles in a bullock cart, specially constructed for the purpose, from a station in Central India to the river. There I launched it, and embarked. Some sixty miles down, a rope, stretched across the river for the better carrying on of some works which were being projected to make it navigable, caught my mast; the swift current soon did the rest, and I made my way to the nearest white man's bungalow in a flannel shirt and pyjamas (all that was left of my outfit), a miserable boat-wrecked, damp duffer. That was in my 'salad days,' when I was green in judgment. Since then experience has taught me more about cruising in small craft.

My next noteworthy cruise was in the North-West of Canada in the year 1885, when the 'affair of the French Canadian Riel and his half-breeds' was called a rebellion, and tried the military resources of the Dominion of Canada. Towards the end of April, a small party of us were at breakfast in a caboose on the line of the Canadian and Pacific Railway at Swift Current. An encounter had taken place between a party of Riel's half-breeds and a force of Canadian artillery and

militia, under General Middleton. We were discussing the chances of the steamer 'Northcote' getting down the river Saskatchewan and carrying her lading of supplies and reinforcements to General Middleton, who was in camp some two hundred miles to the north of us. The vessel was a stern-wheel river steamer, drawing some four feet of water aft; she had successfully ascended the South Saskatchewan during the previous autumn, but had never attempted the more difficult task of going down the

THE 'SASKATOON' JUST BEFORE CROSSING TO CALAIS

river in that part of its course encumbered with a scow on each side and heavily loaded. Something tempted me to offer to go down the river in a little folding canoe I had with me. 'That's very public-spirited of you, Douglas,' said the General in command at the base, who was one of the party; and I felt I was nailed. It was not without inward qualms that I set to to make preparations for my voyage. I had mental visions of wily Indians in ambush taking a pot-shot at the solitary navigator, and sending him to the happy hunting grounds to paddle his own canoe at his

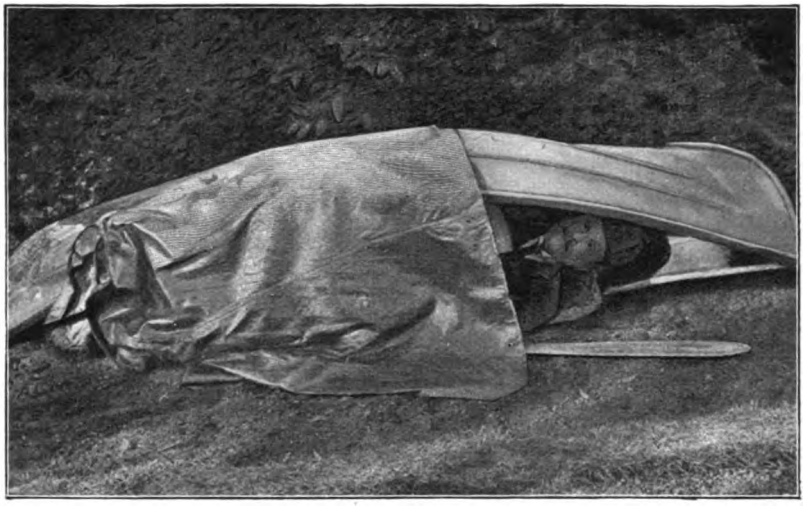
leisure. I could not go back on my offer, however, and next morning saw me seated on a buckboard, drawn by an Indian pony, with my folding canoe in a package beside me, and sundry other packages of supplies and duffle packed below the seat. My friends came round to bid me good-bye, and request locks of my scanty hair with a view to leaving as little as possible for the natives, whom I was expected to meet, to exercise their peculiar talents on. Then I took the trail to the northward, sufficiently marked by strings of vehicles carrying supplies to the river, and made my way over the barren prairie. In the afternoon I reached the river, having had a narrow escape of losing my outfit owing to the apparently meek and broken-down cayuse (pony) taking a mean advantage of me while I was re-arranging my load, and when I had let go the reins. The animal bolted with my rig, leaving me standing on the prairie with my canoe package in my hand. He circled round and scattered a good deal of the rest of the cargo in the vicinity. Fortunately he took the home trail, and was stopped by some teamsters. Then I captured him, and, having gathered up my supplies, continued my drive without further mishap.

I set up my canoe and gave it a preliminary trial on the river in the evening. It was a new one, built the previous autumn, and hitherto unused. It was of the Canadian model, 12 ft. in length, by 2 ft. 6 in. beam, and 12 in. deep amidships, weighed some 45 lb., and was propelled by a double-bladed paddle. I have the boat still, and paddled across the English Channel from Dover to Calais in it in June 1895.

The river flowed in a sandy bed, having by repeated floods cut a channel through the prairie many sizes too large for itself; it was low at that season. I left the canoe on a scow by the river bank, ready for an early start, and returned to a tent in the neighbouring encampment, where I passed the night. Shortly after daybreak next morning I got my gear together, stowed it on board, and embarked. My outfit consisted of a couple of bags of provisions, hard biscuit, tinned meat, and a little tinned fruit, tea, cocoa, and sugar (altogether enough to last me a fortnight), blankets, a waterproof sheet, and a small tin pot for cooking. I had no tent, proposing to utilise my canoe for the purpose of shelter after the manner of the North American Indians.

Although pretty well loaded up, the canoe had plenty of free board, and, helped by the current, I paddled on at a fair pace. 'The thief doth see in every bush an officer,' so at first I saw an Indian lurking in ambush behind each clump of brushwood. After I had passed a great many clumps and no sign of Indians had

come forth from them I began to feel more at ease, and amused myself in making imaginary figures out of the irregular masses of clay and sand, which formed high banks on each side, between which I paddled. Round towers, pinnacles, ruined castles, and moats came into view successively. Desolation is the chief impression I have carried away of the South Saskatchewan. To hit on the right channel was my chief difficulty; unless I watched the set of the current, I would suddenly find my canoe in a *cul-de-sac* with about two inches of water to float on. In attempting to make a short cut, I sometimes found myself under the disagreeable necessity of wading through sand and icy cold water,



MODE OF SLEEPING UNDER CANOE

bare-legged, towing my canoe behind me into the main channel. At noon I stopped to take a rest and a modest dinner of tinned corned beef and hard tack, with an occasional preserved peach, and then on again. Towards evening I made my camp for the night. The process was simple. I selected a dry *coulée* when there was one handy, by the river if possible, spread my bag and blanket on the ground for a bed, and over this I turned my canoe bottom upwards like an umbrella, one gunwale resting on the ground, the other supported a foot or so above it by a short stick. Over the canoe and opening I spread a large waterproof sheet, so as to extemporise an effective shelter tent, beneath which I crept and covered myself up. Even towards the end of April

the nights in the North-West of Canada are sometimes intensely cold, and, occasionally, when I awoke in the early morning I found my waterproof sheet stiff with ice. My supper and breakfast consisted of cocoa and biscuit. No sign of settlement or cultivation was seen on the bank till the morning of the third day of my voyage, when I reached a short bend called the Elbow, where the river makes a sharp curve from north-east to north. Here I saw a solitary hut, standing bare and tenantless, without a sign of its having been occupied; here, also, I was told afterwards I was seen by some scouts on the look-out for the Indians.

When I changed my course for the northward, I met a very stiff breeze blowing up the river, a regular 'nose ender' against which my light boat made little way even though helped by the current. After hammering against it, plash, plash, for an hour or so, I came to the conclusion that the game was not worth the candle, so I made for shore, landed, built a fire, by which I read, meditated, and slept the remainder of the day and night. I was up betimes in the morning; about three o'clock the temperature in my lair underneath the canoe was not conducive to sleep, the wind had fallen during the night, and the river showed glassy and calm. I got under way just as the dawn was beginning to break, and, helped by a strong current, I made good progress down stream, the river being now deeper and its course better marked. After paddling about twenty miles I was startled by an unexpected sound like the boom of a steam whistle, lower down the river, and, stimulated by this, I drove my boat on for all I was worth until I came in sight of the steamer 'Northcote' now wedged by the descending current on a sand-bank. Then I saw the red-coated line of militia soldiers on board, and, rounding to, under the lee of the vessel, made my canoe fast and clambered up. I spent a few hours on board; the vessel, heavily laden and encumbered by a scow on each side, had made very slow progress. By the help of a pair of grasshopper legs, an arrangement like shores swinging on each side, she was lifted off the bank on which she was stuck when I first sighted her, only to ground on another a few miles lower down. This process had been going on for about a week, so that the gear which worked the grasshopper legs was nearly worn out, and with all only some hundred and fifty miles had been accomplished.

After grounding on a third or fourth sandbank I concluded that I had had enough of the 'Northcote,' and took to my canoe again. I may remark I was never overtaken by this steamer, though as she descended the river she made better way,

and reached her destination a day after I did. After leaving the vessel, the river became broader and deeper, the stream dividing past among islands and mudflats wooded beyond the banks—'the moose woods.' Here I saw more animal life than I had met with hitherto. The 'outardes' (Canada wild geese) became more plentiful; beavers splashed into the water from the bank, put their heads above to look about them after their dive, and ducked down again, giving me a view of their tails; a herd of antelope coming down to the river bank, a couple of hundred yards or so in front of me, gazed for a moment, and trotted off. I had no little difficulty in finding a place to camp, as the banks were swampy; but as evening darkened into night I found a dry spot, with bush, on which I built my fire and put up my canoe. Tired with my long day's work, I slept soundly beneath it in spite of hard frost. Next day—the sixth from leaving Swift Current—was the last of my cruise. Making an early start, I paddled past an Indian reservation allotted to a band of Sioux, who had crossed the line from the United States side, after the dispersion of Sitting Bull's tribe, accompanied by that redoubted chief. The band, headed by the chief 'White Cap,' had abandoned their reservation, and gone off to join Riel, leaving their huts and the implements of agriculture which had been given them in the vain hope of changing the nature of these wild men. Some twenty miles further the river narrowed again, and islands in mid-stream divided the current and made the prettiest bit of river scenery I had met with. Below this I saw an inhabited house on the bank, and two boys watching me. From them I found that I was close to the colony Saskatoon, a small settlement on the South Saskatchewan, a little off the main trail to the north.

Then I came to a ferry worked by a friendly half-breed, and landed to make inquiries. I learned I was expected, my departure having been wired from Swift Current. So I carried up my canoe and gear to the ferryman's house, and my cruise was at an end. I had other work to do, looking after some men who had been wounded in a recent encounter of the militia with the half-breeds and Indians, about twenty-five miles further north, and who were brought to the village in the afternoon. In recording this cruise it has occurred to me that I have lost an opportunity of embellishing it with blood-curdling anecdotes of encounters with Indians, narrow escapes, tomahawks, scalping-knives, &c. No one could have contradicted them. Like our great Indian General relating the opportunities of looting that had come in his way, I stand astonished at my own moderation.

I made another rather exceptional cruise in a folding boat from New York to Boston; coasting along the north shore of the Sound up the Bay of Narragansett, to Providence, Rhode Island, down the Sakonet Channel, and across Cape Cod, somewhere about three hundred miles in all. The boat I used on this occasion was a folding skiff, 17 ft. long by 3 ft. 6 in. beam, and 18 in. deep amidships. She carried a lug sail, and was fitted with a 3 in. keel so as to take advantage of a beam wind; a pair of spruce sculls, however, played the chief part in propelling the boat; I had an exciting row on the East River past New York at midnight to begin with. A big city of course never sleeps, but I was scarcely prepared to find so much industry going on by the aid of electric and other light between midnight and 2 A.M. Vessels were being loaded and unloaded, ferry steamers were continually crossing, and factories working; altogether it had a weird and unusual look. After being nearly run down under Brooklyn bridge by a tug with a tow of scows, I kept along the Long Island shore and found less traffic. Just as day was breaking I passed through the once formidable Hell Gate, and into the Sound. As I was in no way pressed for time, and had no apprehensions of being shot from the banks as on the cruise just recorded, my days' runs were not remarkable for the number of miles accomplished. My longest was from New London, Conn., to Newport, R.I., a distance of fifty miles. For about twenty miles the coast is open to the Atlantic, and as it was blowing a fresh S.W. wind, the skiff 'Espérance' bowled along, helped by the current, at a fair speed. Rounding Point Judith and going over the Beaver tail bank I encountered some heavy seas, and had the satisfaction of finding that the boat behaved well. I put in at the quaint old New England city of New Bedford, once celebrated for its whaling ships, many of which were lying as hulks by the wharves, now overgrown with grass. 'Ah!' said an old inhabitant, somewhat regretfully I thought, 'Those were the times a ship came home after three years' absence or more with plenty of oil. Then the town was painted red, and dollars circulated freely.'

I went up the Monument River by the old route the Pequod Indians used to take when they went to trade with the Pilgrim band and their descendants—by whom, if tradition is to be relied on, they were occasionally fleeced. One of the progeny of these worthies is said to have persuaded the guileless red man that his foot weighed exactly a pound, and used it as such to weigh against furs in the opposite scale of the balance. By this

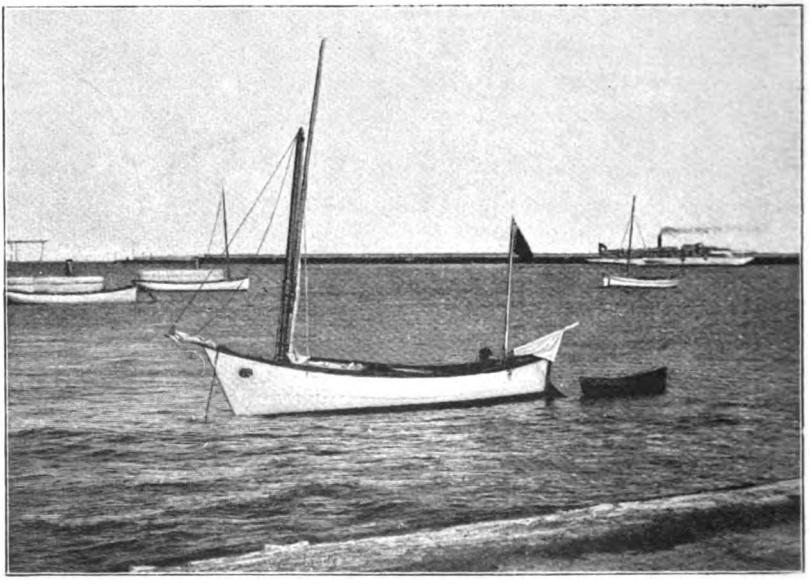
I MANAGED TO FASTEN AN OAR TO THE RING BOLT AT THE STERN

river a pretty country house belonging to a celebrated actor, Joseph Jefferson, is situated, and here I was told he spent much of his time, with the then ex-President Cleveland, fishing. I had my canoe portaged across from the Monument River to Cape Cod Bay, a distance of some five miles. At the entrance to Boston Harbour I encountered an electric storm, a most extraordinary atmospheric disturbance; the sky was darkened as at midnight, then flashes of electric lightning played, and the rain came down in torrents. A squall blew me out about half a mile to sea, but the waves were killed by the excessive rain. Eventually I reached South Boston, with my boat half full of water and my outfit soaking wet. I slept under a tent spread over my skiff on this cruise, but occasionally sought the hospitality of a house on shore, and not in vain. My experience of New England waters was that a canoe cruiser was a welcome visitor, and not an intruder.

The longest cruise I have made single-handed in a small boat was from Collingwood on the Georgian bay of Lake Huron to Chicago on Lake Michigan, a distance, following the coast line, as I did, of between seven and eight hundred miles. The boat I used was a sort of sharpie or dory about three-quarter decked; with a heavy centre board, yawl rigged, with a sliding gunter mainsail. Beneath the fore part of the deck I managed to sling a hammock, though the cabin accommodation (if I may dignify it by this name) was but little more than what the kennel for a St. Bernard dog would afford. I had a tent to put over the cockpit, but I never used it, preferring *al fresco* in the fine weather that generally prevailed. I lived for three months on board this boat, one month on the cruise and two months at anchor. As a rule, I have not been favoured with steady fair winds on my cruises, and this was no exception. After leaving Collingwood I had a good deal of fog and light head winds in the Georgian bay; when the fog cleared off the cruising was all that could be desired, picturesque islands, clear air and water. It is difficult to disabuse oneself of the idea that one is not at sea on these large lakes, the water is so clear, and blue or grey, corresponding with the sky. One can easily understand the legend of how a British man-of-war crew, sent on service without a beaker of fresh water, toiled under the burning sun overcome with thirst which they were afraid to quench with the sparkling fresh water in which they floated.

When I got into Lake Michigan I had an exciting time owing to one of my rudder pintles breaking. I had put out, and encountered a stiff breeze after leaving a little harbour on the north shore of the lake, so thought it advisable to reef my

mainsail. While in the middle of this work I became conscious that something had gone wrong with my steering gear, and, going aft, found the rudder useless. The wind was blowing on to a lee shore, hard, and the waves breaking on the rocky coast warned me of the fate which was in store for me unless I quickly made up my mind to do the right thing. I managed to fasten an oar to the ring bolt at the stern, and hoisting a little bit of sail, succeeded in steering my boat safely back to harbour; but I had a bad quarter of an hour till I got there. On the island of Mackinaw, the ubiquitous Scot greeted me with a quotation from Burns about 'Scotia's halesome parritch' as he watched me on board



THE 'ARTFUL GILLIATT'

my boat in the little dock, cooking my evening meal of that simple restorative. I reached the lake front of the Columbian Exhibition towards the end of June, and there the 'Artful Gilliatt' remained at anchor for two months, close to the Viking ship. In the old Eastern story the traveller who has returned from a voyage by sea from distant lands is asked what wonderful things he has seen. 'The most wonderful thing I have seen,' quoth he, 'is that I am safe on land again;' and the man who takes a long cruise in a small boat for the first time may be inclined to agree with him; but a love for this mode of travel grows and lasts.

ABOUT ROOKS

BY CLIVE H. MEARES

THERE is probably no better-known bird throughout the land than the ubiquitous rook—often erroneously called the 'common crow' by those who, in ignorance, class all black-looking birds together as crows. By the majority of people it is only when identified with the rookery that the rook is accorded his correct name. Why he should be confused with the crafty crow, and compelled, *nolens volens*, to bear a name so opprobrious and hated, is puzzling, as rooks are certainly far more plentiful than crows. Nor is he black, though he appears so at a distance. Close inspection reveals his true colour—a beautiful dark, glossy, almost metallic blue.

Both in character and habits rook-nature is enigmatical, which makes the birds well worth studying. They are confiding and trustful, inasmuch as they usually select their nesting place in trees adjacent to a dwelling-house or beside a public roadway, often in a thickly populated neighbourhood; yet they are shy and wary to a degree when out feeding in the fields. There they are almost as difficult to approach as that wiliest of all birds, the curlew.

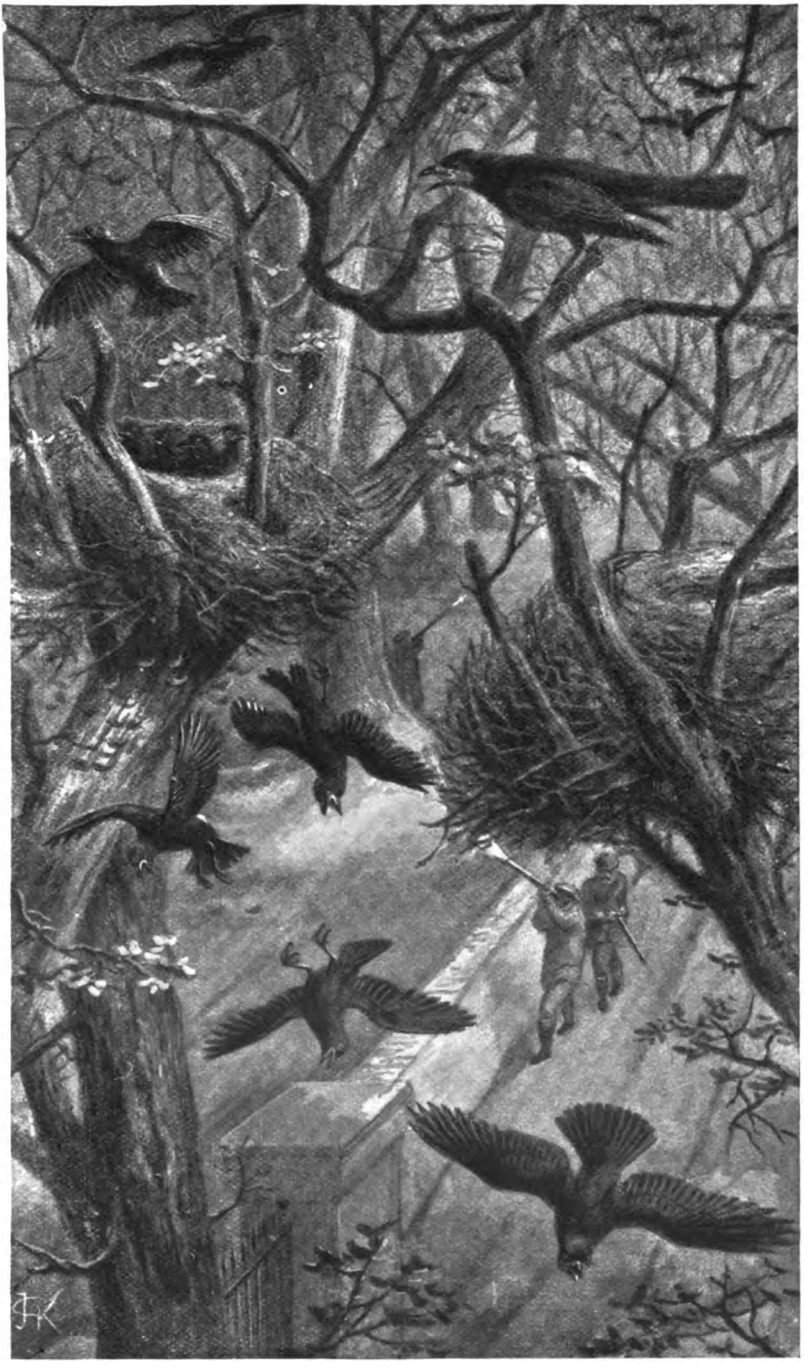
Unlike crows, which are solitary birds, rooks are gregarious and fond of society. In the first place, they possess a permanent, often ancestral, home, the rookery, to which they are as much

attached as the squire to his hall hard by. Whether you want them or not, it is well-nigh impossible to get rid of rooks without sacrificing your loftiest and best-grown trees to the axe. They will undergo almost unlimited persecution rather than budge from their old-established haunts. Generation after generation, each colony returns at sundown to its own particular rookery, despite the annual shooting which usually thins their numbers. Why they choose certain trees in a locality—often by no means the best-grown specimens thereabouts—and shun others, to outward appearances more suitable, is a matter which can never be satisfactorily explained. You may own the finest trees for miles around, and yet live a lifetime without possessing a rookery; whilst your neighbour's 'miserable little spinney of wretched trees,' half a mile off, may be the favoured home of a thriving colony. Their tastes are unaccountable!

Some people believe they are able, by some occult power, to discern and avoid those trees which are unsound and liable to be storm-damaged. The grounds for such a belief, however, are by no means established.

Rooks are the very noisiest birds imaginable round about a house; yet the majority of people who are lucky enough to possess a rookery would sooner by far put up with their unceasing clatter than be deprived of their society. There is something so countrified and social about them, especially when established in the middle of a large town.

They are not very particular what variety of tree they nest in, provided it be tall and strong. Traditionally they are supposed to prefer elms, but beech and oak seem in almost equal favour. In many districts, however, they are compelled by circumstances beyond control to moderate their ideas of comfort. Notably is this the case in the Orkney Islands. Scarcely any trees of size grow up there, yet a thriving colony of rooks lives in Kirkwall. According to the natives, it is not many years since there were no rooks resident in the islands; but I was told that a good few years back some score or more which had paid a spring visit to the islands from the Scottish mainland were detained by rough weather and persistent contrary winds. It chanced to be just breeding-time, so with one accord they set about building their nests on the house-tops of the loftier buildings of the town, and, so far as I know to the contrary, have done so ever since. I was there in August about ten years ago, and the colony seemed flourishing and none the worse, apparently, for the lack of trees. In some parts of Ireland, too, trees are so scarce that the



ACTING AS A TARGET

rooks are compelled, doubtless much against the grain, to build in hedges or large bushes, often within a few feet of the ground. How remarkable it is that birds of such decided habits are able under compulsion to adapt themselves so easily to the exigencies of their locality! They do so from necessity, however, and not from choice.

There are few birds in existence more methodical and business-like than rooks, and the regularity with which every detail of their daily programme is carried out is astonishing. With the first streak of dawn the 'caw, caw' of the rooks begins, and it is not long before the whole colony is awake and preparing for departure to the feeding grounds. There is a good deal of fuss and squabbling during the preliminary 'canters' previous to leaving home. Suddenly the whole colony takes wing. Flying round and round in a wide circle, they rapidly mount to a considerable height, and soon become mere specks in the sky. Never for a moment does the cawing slacken. The din and confusion seem perfectly bewildering, and, listening to the babel of voices, you cannot help wondering the why and the wherefore of this noisy demonstration. Whether it is pure devilry, their 'good morning,' or a parliamentary discussion on the day's proceedings, is an insoluble problem. At any rate, it is a pretty sight, well worth watching. After executing numerous manœuvres, they will scatter about and close up again repeatedly, as though unable to agree upon their destination. This apparently aimless frolic terminates at length as several leaders appear to decide on the course they intend taking, and, separating from the flock, strike out in a definite direction. Squad by squad, like so many soldiers, others follow these leaders, the main body meanwhile continuing to wheel around. Soon after, a big break-away occurs in the ranks, four-fifths of the flock hurrying after the leaders, whilst the remaining few continue circling about indefinitely. Some, thinking better of their dilatoriness, desert the lingerers to straggle after their comrades, whilst the discontented laggards wander off huffishly in an entirely different direction. What unholy motive causes this insubordination is altogether obscure, as they keep the secret locked up in their own black breasts.

On leaving home in the morning rooks often fly a great many miles to reach a favourite or likely feeding ground. During the autumn and spring they seem to prefer newly ploughed lands to any other place. Being extremely fond of insects, they will follow the plough all day long, searching every inch of the newly turned up soil for stray grubs and caterpillars, peering under

every clod for likely finds, and almost tumbling over each other in their eagerness to be first behind the ploughman's heels. Where land is much infested with wireworm they do the farmer incalculable good in ridding the land of these destructive pests. Certainly there are times when they do a little trifling damage to newly sown crops, but the majority of enlightened farmers are strongly inclined to believe that, taking everything into consideration, their valuable services far outweigh their few faults.

The bumps of caution and self-preservation are highly developed in the rook—more so than in any bird I know. You will soon discover this if you study a flock feeding. Having found a field which suits them, and whilst still high overhead, they make a careful survey of the locality, after which they take counsel together, noisily discussing the situation. Meanwhile they perform a series of evolutions similar to their morning frolic. The coast being clear, the inspection is pronounced satisfactory, when some of the bolder spirits among them will begin the descent to earth. It is often a most remarkable sight. Some descend leisurely in the orthodox manner; others, with wings and tail closed, appear to drop with meteor-like rapidity from the sky, till, nearing the ground, they suddenly spread their wings, which instantly check the rapid downward flight, and the bird, gliding along a few yards, lights gently on the ground.

If, however, you cast your eye around, some few of the rooks will be seen perched in the upper branches of several trees scattered about. These sojourners, the sentinel birds of the flock, post themselves at various points of vantage to warn and protect their companions from any danger which may threaten. Rooks never fail to observe this wise precaution before beginning to feed, and the result is they are rarely caught napping. Should any cause for alarm arise the whole flock will be instantly apprised of the fact by the caw of the ever-watchful sentinel who has espied the intruder. This premonitory warning creates considerable uneasiness in the flock, especially amongst those members which have strayed incautiously too near the hedgerow, and they quickly shift their position to safer quarters in mid-field. If the enemy attempts to approach nearer, the danger signal, a peculiarly harsh emphatic 'caw caw caw,' will be sounded several times in rapid succession as the sentinel leaves his post of observation, and the flock, thoroughly alarmed, beats a hasty retreat. They amuse themselves, however, in their own way before wandering off to a fresh place, by giving full vent to the sense of extreme

displeasure they feel, by the most voluble screaming outburst of noise and riot imaginable; after which they soothe their injured feelings by exchanging mutual congratulations on their narrow escape. This timely warning always makes it an exceedingly difficult task to stalk a large flock, and you may consider yourself no mean adept in woodcraft if you succeed in getting within gun-shot. It is almost an acknowledged fact that rooks can tell unerringly the difference between a man who means them mischief and one who intends no injury. As thecountry-folk say, 'they can smell powder,' a phrase which aptly describes their acute perception. They take comparatively little notice of a person walking along the highway, whilst they instantly show alarm at anyone creeping along stealthily under cover of a hedgerow.

A somewhat curious incident often noticed in connection with a flock of rooks is that they are scarcely ever seen unattended by other species. Many birds seem partial to their company, more especially jackdaws and starlings. Whether it is for the protection the rooks' wariness affords them or for some other reason is hard to say. Wherever the rooks go these 'camp-followers' accompany them, and a very convenient arrangement it is for the safety of thieving jack's skin. Another very wary bird, the voracious woodpigeon (or 'quice,' as the country-folk call it), often avails itself of the rooks' protection, finding that the immunity from danger afforded by these cautious birds enables it to feast in security without bothering its head over unseen enemies.

The punctuality with which rooks start nesting operations each spring about the first Sunday in March has often been noted. It matters little whether the spring be an early or late one. About this date an unwonted activity will be observed in the rookery, and very shortly after they begin building in earnest. A rook's nest can scarcely be called a 'thing of beauty,' but it is substantial, and what it lacks in style it makes up for in bulk. It is rather a loosely constructed affair, composed almost entirely of small twigs lined with a little dry grass, which the birds for the most part collect in the immediate vicinity. In spite of the frail architecture, many nests keep together till the following spring, when, with a little patching up, they serve their purpose again. Sometimes a nest is firmly wedged in between several strong forks, and, being added to yearly, grows to extraordinary dimensions. I knew one such nest in a park near Edinburgh which must have measured many feet in girth. This rookery is among the largest in the kingdom. The number of nests there

annually is so great that it takes the keepers and many extra hands some days each spring to reduce the huge colony within reasonable limits. The rookery covers acres of ground in a big oak-wood which slopes down to the banks of the Esk. In dealing with large quantities of rooks retail destruction of individuals is useless. Wholesale warfare on a large scale has to be organised to thin their numbers appreciably and effectually without going to great expense.

The battle of extermination is not started till most of the eggs are hard set or just hatching.

At daybreak the keepers set to work. Armed with guns, they post themselves throughout the woods, choosing positions which will guard as much ground as possible. When all are in position the fusillade begins, and the rooks, startled by the sharp crack of the guns, rise *en masse* from their nests. It is a sight once seen not easily forgotten. The din from the countless myriads of angry cawing throats can be better imagined than described. The consternation in rookland is complete. Time and again the birds essay to return to their nests, and as often are driven away again by the ruthless gunners. This contest of might versus right is kept up from daylight to dusk for a day, or sometimes more if the colony is extra robust that year. Most of the eggs, deprived of warmth, are rendered infertile, whilst scores of the newly hatched fledgelings die of cold and hunger. It seems rather a pitiless way of reducing them, but the keepers assured me it was the only practicable method of dealing with such swarms. Were they left undisturbed the surrounding farmers would suffer considerably from the depredations of such unusual numbers in dry seasons. When food becomes scarce they levy a heavy toll on the eggs of partridges and pheasants, and occasionally, if extra hard pressed, they even so far forget themselves as to attack the poults.

A rather uncommon sight is to be seen in this same rookery. A great many wild-ducks build their nests *in* the oak trees, often fifteen or twenty feet from the ground. The nest, if such it may be called, consisting as it does of little else than decayed wood and a few blades of dry grass, is placed in the hollow formed where a large branch has snapped off and left a few feet of bark jutting out from the trunk. A platform is thus formed, on which the ducks nest secure from molestation. What a charming sight it would be to see how the old duck manages to convey her young to the ground in safety! Some say she picks the little fellows up in her beak and carries them to a place of security, whilst others

HARD TIMES

aver that she holds them with her feet, on her back, or under her wing. I have never been fortunate enough to see for myself how the trick is done, though the first theory seems most natural and likely. However, I am digressing.

As a rule the first event of importance in a young rook's life is 'acting as a target.' As soon as the fledgelings possess a few feathers they want to peep at the world around them, and, to obtain a good view, hop on to the nearest branch. This is the sportsman's chance. Possibly the little creature escapes the first bullet, and, sense of the humorous being undeveloped so early in life, deems it wise to retire with grace and celerity to the parental nest. Some podgy youngsters display stoical indifference to external affairs. Their career ends abruptly in 'rook pie'—a most unpleasant delicacy.

As soon as the young rooks are strong enough to fly they may be seen wherever you go. You meet them in all kinds of unexpected places. Sitting on a fence or tree they caw continually for food, which the parents are most industrious in providing. Each time the old birds approach the 'rooklets' positively quiver with excitement. With flapping wings and open beaks they await the tit-bits which are promptly and ravenously gulped down. No sooner is one morsel finished than they begin crying 'more, more.' Luckily they know not dyspepsia.

In early life the base of a rook's beak is covered with black bristles, but the birds use their powerful beak so continually for digging that it turns almost white after a year. This makes an easy and certain way of recognising old stagers at a glance.

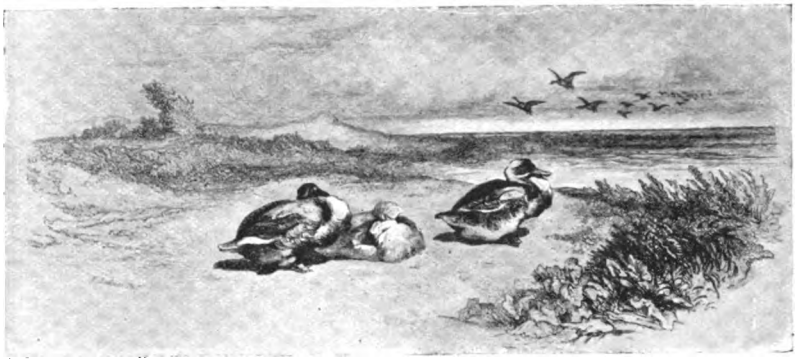
Near big cities rooks become remarkably indifferent to the busy world around them, going and coming as though they were still in the heart of the country. In most cases the rookery was probably established before the town was there. Everyone, of course, can call to mind rookeries situated in the centre of large towns, the very last resort one would expect them to choose.

In severe weather, when the ground is frost and snow bound, they grow wonderfully tame and bold, often chevying the poultry from their food, and even venturing under the dining-room window to grab the scraps intended for the robins and small birds. If vegetable and insect food be abundant rooks avoid carrion, but at a pinch they are by no means bigoted, and will pick a bone as readily as a dog.

On extra cold winter mornings you will see them, with feathers all ruffled out, looking twice their natural size as they sit almost numbed on the branch of some small tree, scarcely able to fly on

your approach. Cold has a remarkably taming effect on all birds, more especially on the shy retiring kinds, which at all other times studiously avoid the homestead.

There is one more point worth mentioning. Rooks are very staunch and true friends to each other, as you can discover if you chance to shoot one from a flock. I once did so, and was both surprised and interested at the hostile demonstration that followed. The comrades of the unfortunate bird, with every appearance of intense anger and irritation, came swooping down and swishing past me in a most menacing and uncomfortable manner. They kept up this warlike demonstration for some few minutes, and there was no doubt they were much aggrieved at the untimely end of their companion. I have shot scores, but only saw this happen once, and then I need scarcely say I lamented my thoughtless act as much as the rooks regretted the loss of what I fancy must have been one of their leaders.



CRICKET
IN THE YEAR OF THE QUEEN'S ACCESSION

BY A. C. COXHEAD

RETROSPECT is natural just at present; we are all considering the difference which exists between various things as they are and as they were sixty years ago when Queen Victoria ascended the throne, and it has occurred to me to study the curious contrast between the general estimation in which the national sport of cricket was held in the first year of Her Majesty's reign and that in which it is held in the sixtieth.

It would be fairly safe to say that from the beginning of May to the middle of September last year each issue of the 'Times' devoted on an average at least one column to cricket news; what the 'Times' did some of the other daily papers did even more generously, and hardly a magazine not specially limited in its objects failed to supply its readers with one or more articles on the subject. In the magazines of 1837 I find one allusion only to cricket, and that is an etymological one. The index for the 'Times' for 1837 has five entries under the heading of Cricket, on referring to which we find that two only of them are really concerned with the subject, and of these one only is a record of the game. Two are descriptions of *fêtes* held on Lord's Ground, one being 'in aid of the Dispensary for the Diseases of the Ear,' and the attractions of the other were balloon ascents. An allusion to the smooth green turf alone suggests faintly the noble game! One entitled 'Cricket Match

Extraordinary,' which raised keen expectations, is a letter in large type, signed 'Wiciamicus,' describing a match between All England and the Crimconnellite Club, and proves to be rather a ponderous skit upon the result of the recent general election. The concluding paragraph, however, is worth quoting for its queer jumble of cricket terms, at which any schoolboy's little sister of to-day would scoff:

'Players of England! One word of advice from an old cricketer. Remember that pluck, practice, and careful and constant watching-out can alone form a good player, and though the season is just over, keep your bats well-oiled, your balls well-greased, and be prepared to pitch your wickets at a moment's notice, and when called to the ground calmly and steadily "Back up," "Back up," "Back up."'

The picture of the cricketer called suddenly from his well-earned repose at the end of the season, and, with well-oiled bat in one hand and well-greased ball in the other, watching out and backing up, is a pretty one, though difficult to realise in all its details; but amateur politicians who 'wrote to the papers' in 1837 were no more coherent than are their grandchildren in 1897!

The fourth of our references is the earliest in time—viz. February 17—and has some connection with cricket, although the insertion in the 'Times' may be ascribed more to a feeling of loyalty to the Crown than to any interest in the game. It is a paragraph copied from the 'Brighton Gazette,' and is as follows:

'We have just had communicated to us another instance of his Majesty's liberality in promoting all establishments for the amusement and benefit of this town and county. It is generally known that a Sussex Cricket Club was at the close of last season established for the purpose of raising a fund by subscription, to be expended in playing County matches, and his Majesty has been graciously pleased to transmit through Sir Henry Wheatley the sum of 20*l.* towards the undertaking, with a strong expression of his Majesty's desire to encourage the manly exercise of Cricket, as a game which so peculiarly belongs to this country.'

There remains only one reference to make, and that is really a record of a cricket match. But the match was not one of any but local interest, although we are told that 'the expectation of it caused the greatest excitement in that part of the county;' it is not a county match, nor a Gentlemen and Players match, nor the North and South match, fixed to commemorate the Jubilee

of the Marylebone Club. The 'Times' could find room for balloon ascents, and *fêtes* in aid of hospitals held on Lord's Ground, but not for one word even to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of its lessees; this, the one cricket match worthy to be preserved in the sheets of the leading journal, was 'Dagnall *v.* Two Waters,' and was played on Boxmoor Common at the end of July. No score is given, only the result and a few details, to which, however, being curiosities, I shall refer later.

In 1896 nearly two hundred first-class matches were played in England. The editor of 'Cricket Scores and Biographies,' to which monumental work I am indebted for much of what follows, has collected the figures of fifty-four matches played in 1837, of which thirteen only are what we should now call 'first class,' and many of the others are of no more importance than 'Dagnall *v.* Two Waters,' which, by the way, is not included among them. Although, no doubt, a far greater number of minor matches were played, of which the scores have not been preserved, these thirteen most probably comprise all those of 'first-class' quality, and to keep this article within bounds, and also for the purpose of comparison (1837 *v.* 1896), I deal only with them, leaving for the time comment on some points of interest which are prominent in the others.

These thirteen matches are the following:—

Five county matches:	
Sussex *v.* Kent	2
Sussex *v.* Notts	2
Notts *v.* Kent (their first encounter)	1
Six Marylebone Club matches:	
v. 'The Undergraduates of Oxford'	2
v. 'The Undergraduates of Cambridge'	2
v. Sussex	2
North *v.* South	1
Sussex *v.* England	1
	13

Sussex thus played in seven of the thirteen, and M.C.C. in six. There were two Gentlemen and Players matches, but, as will be seen later, neither was first class Sussex won four of its seven matches, beating Notts twice, M.C.C. once, and England, and lost twice to Kent, and once to M.C.C. As Kent also beat Notts, I presume the hop county was 'champion' in 1837 (although our grandfathers, happily for them, had not invented the title), winning all three of its matches. In 1896 it was

ninth on the list of fourteen. The Marylebone Club won and lost one match with each of its opponents.

The first observation one makes in looking at the scores of these thirteen matches, and the most striking difference between them and the scores of our own, is the lowness of the figures. The aggregate of runs is 4,561 for 464 wickets, or less than 10 apiece! In 1896, four matches yielded 4,960 runs for 128 wickets, giving an average of nearly 39, and five others produced 5,302 runs for 117 wickets, or nearly 46 runs each! The perfection of modern grounds and the use of boundaries (although these do not always favour the batsman) will account for much of this difference, but not for all, or nearly all. I do not think the bowling was better than that of our time—judging from the number of wides, it must have been sometimes very erratic—and round-arm bowling had been legalised eight years before, so it could have had no unknown terrors; the fielding could not have been better, as no really fine fielding can come off if the ground be not true, and I can only conclude that the batting was inferior, and that, with a few exceptions, none of the men who played first-class cricket in 1837 would have been eligible on their form of that year for any club of repute in 1896.

With such low scoring, it is not very surprising that all these thirteen matches were finished, although this presents another point of contrast between the two years; but it is rather remarkable, in view of the opinion now generally held, to find that only two of them were won by the side which went in first. It may be mentioned here that of the other forty-one matches recorded, many of them occupying only one day, twenty-eight only were finished, the side having first innings winning exactly half of them.

The highest aggregate in a match was 637 for 37 wickets (against 1,288 for 30 wickets in the Sussex and Somersetshire match at Brighton in 1896), viz. in the M.C.C. and Oxford match at Lord's on June 22 and 23, and of these 120 were extras—81 byes, 36 wides, and 3 'noes'! M.C.C. made 114 and 204, 'the Undergraduates' 205 and 114 for six wickets, and these were the only first-class innings in 1837 which reached the second century. The best individual scores were: Fuller Pilch, 84 for Sussex *v.* England; F. Broadbridge, 77 for Sussex *v.* Notts; Hon. E. H. Grimston, 74 for Oxford *v.* M.C.C.; Fuller Pilch, 69 (not out) for Kent *v.* Sussex; E. T. Wenman, 60 for England *v.* Sussex; T. Box, 56 (not out) for Sussex *v.* Notts. These are the only scores over 50, and very few others come near that figure.

No analysis of bowling was kept in 1837, nor for long afterwards. Moreover, as the bowler's name is seldom given unless he bowled his man, an imperfect estimate only can be formed of individual prowess in this department. A general average, however, of under 10 must have given the leading men wonderful figures! On the other hand, many more wickets were taken in this unequivocal manner than is now the case. In one or two matches, however, the name of the bowler is given for catches, &c.; and in the Sussex *v.* Kent match, played at Brighton, the number of balls bowled by, and of runs made off, each bowler is furnished; but as in this match catches are not credited to him, the analysis is still a very imperfect one. In the match, however, M.C.C. *v.* Sussex, played at Brighton, this important detail is supplied, and the others partially, so that, so far as it goes, we are enabled to state an analysis as follows:—

Sussex (first innings): Cobbett, — balls, 31 runs, 3 wickets; Redgate, — balls, 26 runs, 5 wickets.

Marylebone (first innings): Lillywhite, 126 balls, 19 runs, 7 wickets; Broadbridge, 60 balls, 25 runs, 1 wicket; Millyard, 12 balls, 4 runs, 0 wicket; Pellett, 12 balls, 5 runs, 0 wicket; Picknell, 40 balls, 18 runs, 2 wickets.

It is evident that in 1837 the desire to make a good game was stronger than to score a 'point' or make a 'record.' Hence we find matches against odds, and, more frequently still, men 'given' to an ostensibly weaker side in order to equalise the chances of victory. The M.C.C. played frequently 'with' professionals, which shows that it was not then considered a matter of course that a club of amateurs should avail themselves of the assistance of their ground *employés*. In the North and South match, Box and Cobbett were subtracted from the strength of the South and added to that of the North (this match, by the way, produced only 259 runs for 35 wickets), and in the Sussex and England match Pilch was given to the county. The transfer of Box in the former instance is remarkable, as he was one of the great wicket-keepers of the day; and in the latter, when it is considered that Pilch, in the enforced absence from all cricket of Alfred Mynn, was incomparably the best batsman in England, and indeed made in this match 122 runs of the 266 all told scored by Sussex, the victory of the county could not have been a subject of much local jubilation!

We have seen that only three counties appear in these first-class matches; two others only figure in the minor ones. 'The Undergraduates of Cambridge' played their first and only match

in all history with the Gentlemen of Hertfordshire ('with' Cobbett). The University was beaten by 105, after having had a lead of 24 on the first innings; but as Cobbett made 148 out of 311, and took 12 wickets, the County would have fared badly without him. Surrey appears this year only as 'Ten of Surrey, with Taylor' (a Sussex man), playing Shillington, but the list of matches, as might be expected, includes several played by local Surrey clubs, and although only one match played by the Montpelier Club, one of the forerunners of the Surrey County Club, has been preserved, Reigate, Mitcham, and other nurseries of Surrey cricket figure in the list, and the names are found both of men illustrious on their own merits, and of others whose descendants afterwards became even more famous, such as Caffyn, Jupp, and Sewell. The name of Lambert occurs twice, but in one case certainly, and in the other probably, it was not the renowned player of Outwood, one of the fathers of historic cricket, who was an elderly man in 1837, having first played for Surrey in 1801, although he lived another fourteen years.

There were two Gentlemen and Players matches in 1837, both played at Lord's. The first was the 'Barndoor' match, otherwise known as 'Ward's Folly,' after its promoter, Mr. W. Ward, who took part in it, being then nearly fifty years of age. He had played in nearly every one of these matches since 1819, and had made one of the rare centuries of those days in 1825, viz. '102, not out, hurt by Brown on the finger.' With the exception of a match played in 1834, no even trial of strength had taken place since 1823, when the amateurs had been beaten by 345 runs. (In 1834 they were beaten by an innings and 21 runs.) In 1832, the advantage given to them was the reduction of their wickets to 22 inches by 6, their opponents' being as usual. In the 'Barndoor' match, the handicap was of the reverse character, the Players having to defend four stumps, forming a wicket 36 inches by 12! Notwithstanding this, the latter won the match by an innings and 10 runs. The game was a curious one. The Gentlemen made 54 (W. Lillywhite taking 9 wickets, and Box stumping 2 and catching 3), Mr. E. H. Grimston, of Oxford University, making 13, the only double figures, and their opponents lost eight wickets for 17, Sir Frederick Bathurst and Mr. C. G. Taylor dividing them equally. Redgate of Notts, however, and Cobbett of Surrey made 35 and 32 respectively, and the innings closed for 99, the Gentlemen making only 35 in their second 'hands.' Fuller Pilch was out 'hat knocked on wicket, b. Bathurst,' a fate that befel the Mr. Taylor aforesaid six years later 'b. Hillyer,' a method

HAT ON WICKET. HOW'S THAT?

of dismissal which becomes partially intelligible when we remember that at the time Her Majesty ascended the throne cricket was played in 'chimney-pots.' In the return match the usual form of odds was resumed, and the Gentlemen numbered sixteen, being again soundly beaten by an innings and 38 runs. Mr. Grimston did not play in the second match, but Mr. J. H. Kirwan, who was very successful as a bowler for the 'Undergraduates of Cambridge' (taking 13 wickets in the first match against M.C.C.), took 4 wickets, all bowled. Other University players in one or both matches were A. Coote, R. W. Keate, and C. Beauclerk of Oxford, and C. G. Taylor, one of the best bats of the day, and Hon. F. Ponsonby of Cambridge. The two Universities did not meet in this year. The only matches previously had been played in 1829 and 1836, Oxford winning both easily. The contest was renewed, however, in the following year, and, with the exception of 1844, has continued without interruption.

A 'record' was made by Alfred Adams' innings of 279 for Saffron Walden against Bishop's Stortford. The total of the innings, which lasted the whole of the one day allotted to the match, was 474, 'one of the few innings over 400 ever made.' Fuller Pilch made 160 (out of 283) for Town Malling *v.* Reigate (with W. Lillywhite and Taylor), and as the former was probably the best bowler of his day (alas for Sussex that there are no Lillywhites now, neither William, nor John, nor Fred, nor James!), this innings is rightly described as a 'most wonderful' one. A few other good innings are J. Taylor's 86 for West Sussex *v.* East Sussex; Mr. C. G. Taylor's 80, not out, for M.C.C. *v.* Wanstead Park (for whom Mr. E. H. Budd made his last appearance at Lord's, being then fifty-two years old, his first having been made thirty-five years before); Caldecourte's 76 and Mr. E. H. Grimston's 65 for Hitchin Priory *v.* Hitchin Town—the latter, by the way, having to make 188 in their second innings, 'gave up' after they had lost five wickets for 40, a cruel slur on the remainder of the team; Lord Winterton's 64 not out for Shillington *v.* 'Surrey;' Mr. S. Bathurst's 56 for Cambridge University *v.* Harrow; T. Sewell's 55 for Mitcham *v.* The Montpelier Club; and Mr. Ward's 50 for M.C.C., also against Wanstead Park. The two innings mentioned above are the only ones which exceeded two hundred in these minor matches.

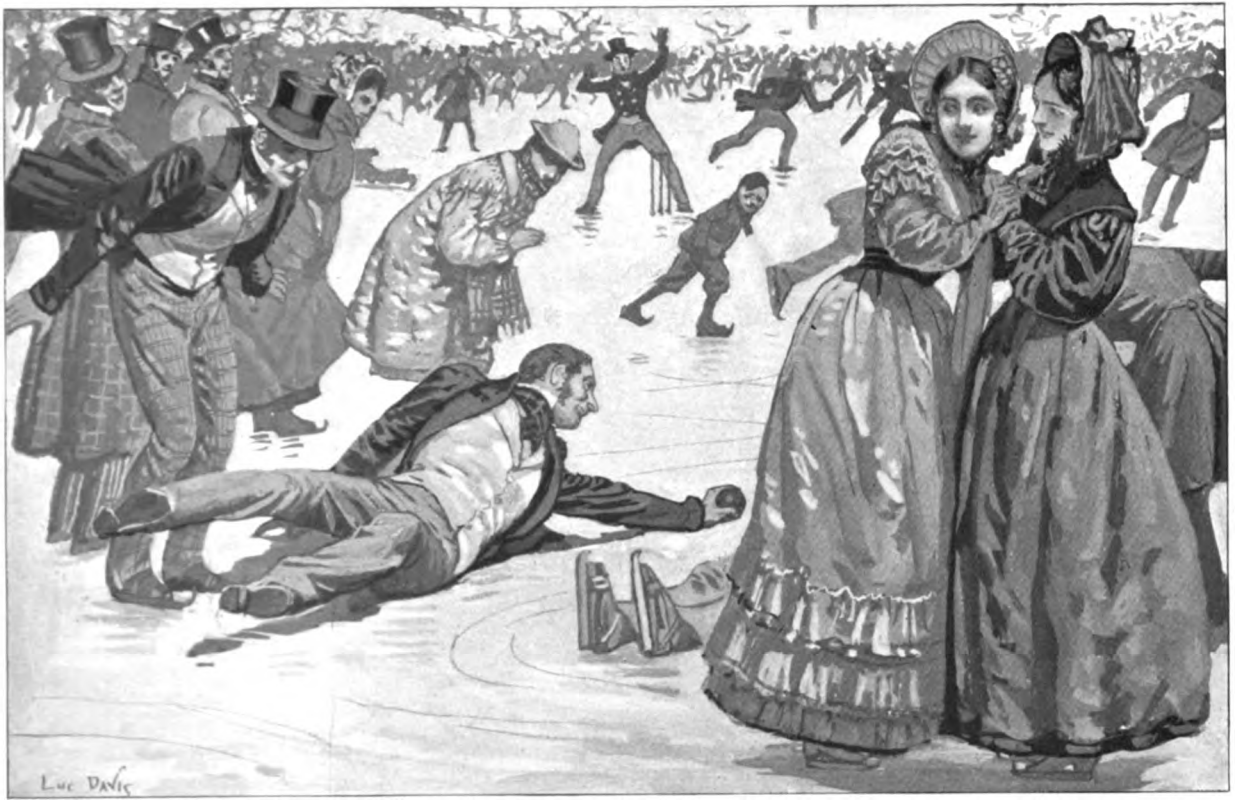
In the match Dagnall Green *v.* Two Waters, we are informed by the 'Times' that the two youngest members of the former club—viz. Mr. G. H. Horn and Mr. William Green—made 137 of the total of 188, but the individual figures are not given.

Spectators have often shown impatience at the slowness in scoring of a Hall or a Scotton, or even of a Shrewsbury; but what would their feelings be now if they had to watch the Two Waters Club, who, going in at 10 o'clock on Thursday, were not all out until nearly noon on Friday, having scored – 54 runs! The 'Times' records the fact gravely, and without comment.

The last of the B matches—*i.e.* in which one side was composed of players whose names began with that letter—was played in this year, the first having been played in 1805. Beagley, Box, and Broadbridge were the most prominent in this last appearance; the first of these had played as a B in 1816. The cricket world is too busy now for such alphabetical fancies, but very strong teams could be made from several individual letters. I have alluded to Box as one of the great wicket-keepers of his day, and in Gentlemen and Players matches, which, until the visits of the Australians, may be considered the high-watermark of excellence, he filled that place, succeeding Wenman, from the year under consideration to 1852. He was playing in the 1853 match, but we find the entry in the score 'st. Chatterton,' so, for part of an innings at least, he was not at his old post. From 1854 to 1866, with hardly a break, Tom Lockyer was supreme, handing the gloves in the second match of the latter year to his comrade Pooley, who, missing only two years, when Pinder, Phillips, and E. Lockwood took his place, did not lay them down until 1879, the three men thus covering a period of forty-three years.

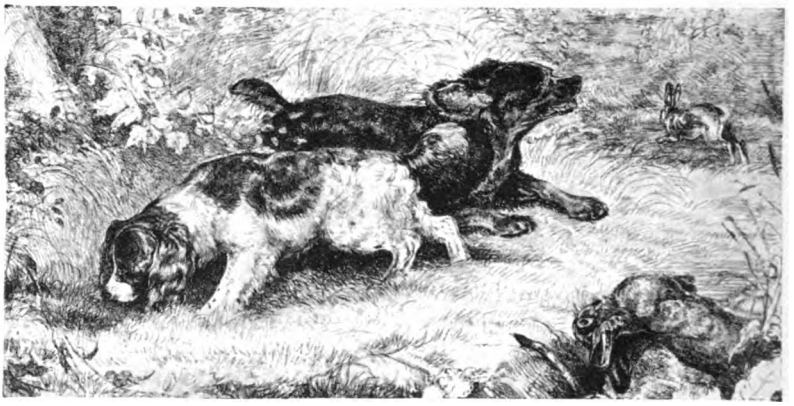
Reference has been made to Mr. Alfred Mynn's absence from cricket during 1837. In August 1836, while practising for the match at Leicester, South *v.* North, he so severely injured his leg that he could not bowl, but insisted upon batting, although suffering acute pain. He made 21 not out in the first innings, and in the second 125, also not out, so aggravating the injury by this prolonged strain on his endurance that he was incapable of playing in the following year. Both he and his great protagonist and comrade, Fuller Pilch (a Norfolk man, by the way, who 'qualified' for Kent under 'powerful inducements'), were now in the zenith of their powers, being thirty and thirty-four years of age respectively. Yet, fourteen years later, we find them the subjects of eulogy which would excite ridicule even in these days of hero-worship, if offered to Dr. Grace or Arthur Shrewsbury.

A match played on the ice at Harewood between Harewood and Stank on February 15, 1838, belongs, I suppose, to the season of 1837, and is interesting if only as a weather record. Harewood made 486, and Stank 212 for four wickets; one batsman hit a 'thir[illegible]ner.'



CRICKET ON THE ICE, 1837

Some modifications of the laws were made at the end of this year. The size of the ball was fixed at its present dimensions by an addition to Law 1. (It is now Law 4.) An alteration was made in Law 14 ('which in future shall be 15'), viz. 'That in the event of a change of bowling, no ball shall be allowed for the sake of practice.' This is now incorporated in Law 18, in different words. With so many and so frequent proposals to alter the Laws of Cricket, a history of their origin and development would be interesting and instructive. It is not generally known that the original 'follow-on' limit was 100, and was fixed in 1835. So disproportionate did this appear to the average scale of scoring that it was reduced to 80 in 1854. As we know, it has recently been raised to 120, and the whole matter is again under consideration. It is to be hoped that, if any further change be made, the law will be so drawn that it will be impossible to evade its spirit while obeying the letter.



THE PROSPECTS OF THE RACING SEASON

BY R. K. MAINWARING

In the March number of the 'Badminton Magazine' of last year I glanced in a short article at the prospects of the then coming season. This will always be known as 'the Prince's year,' for both the Derby and St. Leger were won by the Prince of Wales's Persimmon. In writing my former paper I see that in mentioning this colt the words were used: 'Should he win the Derby we shall witness such a scene of loyalty and enthusiasm as has never been seen on a racecourse.' I think that all who had the good fortune to be at Epsom on that memorable occasion will agree with me that 'such a scene of loyalty and enthusiasm' was never before witnessed on a racecourse, and is almost beyond the power of description. To turn to the other side of the picture, the Turf lost by death two prominent and lavish supporters--Baron de Hirsch and Colonel J. T. North. With the name of the former will always be associated the deeds of that great mare, La Flêche; and though Colonel North will not be remembered by any particular horse of the very many for which he gave enormous prices, at any rate he was a keen follower of all sports.

With this brief retrospect we must now turn to the prospects of the ensuing season. All the chief owners remain to give the

Turf their support, and the gaps in their numbers caused by death are at once filled up. It is welcome news that Mr. William Cooper has purchased Mr. Jones's share of Newhaven; the horse is now the sole property of the former gentleman, whose intention, I am delighted to hear, is to bring the Australian crack over to this country. Such enterprise as this conduces immensely to the welfare of the Turf, and if our best horses are beaten by a foreign importation, we have the satisfaction of knowing that his ancestors have been exported from the mother country, and that perhaps the climate of the Antipodes may have improved the breed of what we, as Englishmen, are wont to imagine the best horses in the world. Without doubt this memorable season, in which our gracious Queen will have reigned for sixty years, will see a great influx of foreign potentates to our shores, to offer their congratulations to her Majesty, and we may assume that our racecourses will be visited by them and their suites. Royal Ascot will therefore be more than usually royal and brilliant.

As for the prospects of the Spring Meetings, I think it will be acknowledged that on the whole the acceptances for the great handicaps are as good as, if not better than, is usually the case. Before these pages are in print the Lincoln and Liverpool Meetings will be over, and racing will be in full swing. The new rules of the Jockey Club concerning handicappers have caused several changes to be made, and the City and Suburban and Metropolitan Handicaps at the Epsom Spring Meeting are now framed by Mr. R. I'Anson instead of Mr. C. Weatherby, who made them last year. Major Egerton is again responsible for the Kempton Jubilee, and is to be congratulated upon an excellent acceptance. Chester had to seek a new handicapper this year, and the directors induced Mr. J. B. Topham, of Liverpool, to undertake the work, with the result that the acceptance of thirty-eight out of forty-eight entries is the best proportion of all the Spring Handicaps, and is a performance that must be most satisfactory to the framer of the weights, as indeed to all who have the interests of this famous old meeting at heart. As is well known, Chester is run on the most liberal lines, and the executive have increased the value of the Great Cheshire Handicap to one thousand pounds. The two-year-old races have filled well, and in the old-fashioned Dee Stakes we are promised the appearance at the post of that bloodlike colt Silver Fox, a son of Satiety and Silver Sea, the property of his breeder, Mr. J. G. Joicey. This colt, it will be remembered, won the Gimcrack Stakes at York, and is probably the best that has been yet sired by Satiety;

indeed, in the opinion of some people, his chance for the Derby is not so remote as is generally imagined.

Last year, when reviewing the three-year-old colts, Persimmon, St. Frusquin, and Regret seemed to stand out by themselves; the two former fulfilled their promise, but Regret's running was disappointing. This season, as last, three colts appear to be above their rivals in merit—Velasquez, Galtee More, and Vesuvian—who are all in the Two Thousand Guineas and the Derby. Velasquez is a son of Donovan and Vista, the dam of Bona Vista and Sir Visto, and is the property of Lord Rosebery, who bred him. He was out five times last season, and sustained his only defeat in the Middle Park Plate. This was effected by Galtee More, a fine powerful son of Kendal and Morganette, the property of a good all-round Irish sportsman, Mr. John Gubbins. Velasquez in appearance bears a striking likeness to his sire Donovan, who has also transmitted his action to his son. On the 'top of the ground' he seemed to sail away with easy far-reaching stride; but in the Middle Park Plate, when the course was very heavy and holding, his more powerful conqueror, Galtee More, who evidently, as the phrase runs, 'revelled' in the heavy going, beat him with apparent ease. The next meeting of these cracks will be anxiously looked forward to by their partisans. Vesuvian is a dark bay son of Royal Hampton and Fuse, by Bend Or—Fusee, the last named being dam of the Derby winner, St. Blaise, who was exported to the United States, and also of Match Box, a good racehorse. Vesuvian was bred by Lord Alington, and is nominated for his engagements by Sir Frederic Johnstone, who has for many years raced in partnership with the Lord of Crichel. The only appearance of this colt on a racecourse was in the Dewhurst Plate, when, being somewhat backward, he was not much fancied by his stable; but he gave a very promising performance by winning easily by three lengths over the severe seven furlongs. Of the trio my own preference is for Galtee More.

It must be a matter for general satisfaction that the stewards are anxious to increase the number of long-distance races, and that from the fund that is levied from racecourses they are enabled to give substantial prizes of 200*l.* each for races of two miles. There can be no doubt that such a well-known authority as Mr. John Porter is right when condemning the vastly excessive proportion of short-distance races. Our horses may possibly be as good stayers as in days gone by, but with so many five-furlong scrambles to run, and to be prepared for, their staying powers are

not discovered. Such a large number of valuable two-year-old races take place nowadays that there is a great temptation to bring out horses at that tender age to an extent which injures their future prospects. On the whole the past winter has been favourable to training operations, and, as far as I have heard, the stables at Newmarket and in the provinces have enjoyed a singular immunity from disease.

With regard to the trainers there is little change to note. George Chaloner, the ex-jockey, has opened a training stable, and, with the advice and kindly aid of Captain Machell, is sure to get on. He has already a promising string of horses under his care. Of old-fashioned racecourses I learn, and without regret, that Newton-le-Willows will in future have its fixture at Haydock Park, and that the old oval course will soon be covered with bricks and mortar. The new course is under the same ownership, and is the property of Lord Newton. Folkestone was anxious to have a new racecourse, but the stewards of the Jockey Club considered that there were enough courses already; I understand, however, that the promoters mean to hold races under National Hunt Rules. Of the metropolitan courses, Sandown and Kempton being first in the field are doing very well, but they do not prevent Hurst Park, Gatwick, and Lingfield from advancing yearly in popular favour. Residents in the metropolis can now enjoy racing with such surrounding comforts that no wonder its popularity has so much increased of late years.

In looking forward to the prospects of racing, with an increasing number of horses and owners, one great difficulty seems to me to grow, and that is the scarcity of capable jockeys. Considering how lucrative a successful jockey's vocation is, and that every office in this country is thronged with candidates seeking to make a living, it is really wonderful that there should be such a dearth of riders. The Jockey Club at the Newmarket meetings have a certain number of Apprentices' Plates, and perhaps this is the best way to discover latent talent. If other meetings would follow the example of Newmarket, we might gradually discover more efficient horsemen. You may have your horse as fit as the trainer can make him, and in a race with such a weight, or in such company, that his chance may be rosy; but if you have not a jockey to put up, the result is likely to be disappointing. The jockey question seems to me to be one of the most difficult the Turf world has to deal with; the law of supply and demand does not appear to work here as it should do.

On the whole, however, the outlook for the coming racing season is very hopeful and encouraging. The victory of Persimmon was most beneficial in every way to the highest interests of the Turf, and will add greatly to its future popularity. It only remains for that beautiful horse to add the Ascot Cup to his well-earned laurels, to make ever memorable the connection of our future King with England's oldest and most popular sport.

TRAINING SETTERS

BY E. F. T. BENNETT

RECORD beating has so laid hold of most people now-a-days that little interest seems to be taken in those pursuits, amusements, or sports, which, to be thoroughly enjoyed, need not be competitive. Competition, no doubt, brings a great many things to a seemingly high state of efficiency, but this is often attained at a loss to real thoroughness, which shows itself everywhere round us. The mile is run in a shorter time than it was a few years ago, at the expense of the runner's health, for the human animal is essentially a walking animal. Killing game has been reduced to a science at the expense of hunting, and so on. So training dogs to hunt for game is not looked upon as it used to be; and yet there is perhaps more real pleasure in this work than in any other kind of sport. The trainer has no complicated tackle to hamper his movements, and if he is in good condition and ready to walk for miles across country, is blessed with great patience, and delights in dogs, he is all right. No sporting dog is a pleasanter companion than a setter, or gives greater enjoyment to its owner as a hunter, for his untiring gallop alone is a sight that never gets stale. Shooting over setters in wide moorlands and bogs, when perhaps game is scarce, is by no means a dull occupation. You can walk in a straight line on a given point with your wise dog or dogs hunting the ground before you, undisturbed, until game is found. Then all your senses tingle as

you go to the set, and encourage the statue-like animal to go on. Sometimes he stands as if turned to stone, then at last he moves carefully forward, there is a sudden rush of wings, you shoot and kill or miss, your dog lies down until you have reloaded, and if you have killed, a hunt begins for the wounded or dead. Let us consider the training of our setters to enable them to give us sport some day.

Six round, ball-like looking pups have made their appearance, but of these two must either be drowned or brought up away from the mother, for she could not manage the whole lot. We leave them with her for a few days, and are fortunate enough at the end of a week to find a foster-mother, a regular cur truly, but who turns out to be a most excellent nurse. Choosing the two was not an easy matter, and as we only intended to train two, we had to pick out two more to send away after they were weaned. Pups very early show great difference in character, and the trainer must, of course, use his own judgment as to which ones he will keep.

The two that were in charge of the foster-mother turned out well under her careful nursing and the wise treatment of their master in feeding. This latter is all important; for, like children, pups are ruined by a meat diet, and by being allowed to eat perpetually. The greatest cleanliness in the kennel must be insisted upon, and the pups be kept like new pins.

In a short time we find ourselves with only two pups to think about, and can devote our attention to their training. Ever since they were born almost, it has been our practice to take them in a cricket bag to a field near us with the mother in close attendance on her offspring, who, when released, were separately greeted by her. The opening of the bag was always amusing, for the sudden change from dark to light caused great blinking of eyes, and as each one climbed up and tumbled out, often on its back, a clumsy sort of game without rules followed, the mother looking on or joining in with great contentment.

Now, however, there are only two pups, so the game is hardly as amusing to see; but it is good enough any way, and perhaps less trying for the patient mother with fewer to hang on to her ears. Half an hour of this, and we pack pups up and go home, taking care that all three are properly housed and attended to on their return. And let all dog-trainers mark well that it is not in the field alone that the best training is done.

At the end of three weeks we make another step in the education of our pups, who, as usual, start in the bag, being let

PRESSED DOWN IN THE EXACT SPOT

out, however, before the actual training-ground is reached, for they must now learn to follow. The mother is motioned by the hand to keep to heel, and the pups slowly but surely make their way after her. On arrival at the right spot—for we always go to the same place—the hand is raised and the mother is 'Down charge,' and lies down. This order is more easily given, as the words are easier to say than 'Down shot,' and the sudden drop of the mother is noticed by the two children, who, however, begin their usual game, hanging on to her ears and rolling and tumbling about near her. A sign sets her on foot again, and we go homewards, the pups following to their carriage. This treatment continues for a fortnight, and at the end of it the pups have some idea of the meaning of the upraised hand; for we must depend eventually on signs, and not on the voice, for directions in the field. So a day at last comes to find out how much our pups have learnt. One pup only goes with us, and evidently misses his mother and sister. The field is reached, at the usual place the hand is raised, and the great trial of patience begins. We say 'Down charge,' press down the pup and hold up the hand immediately, and until the order is obeyed instantly no further step must be attempted.

Day after day brother and sister are taken out alone, until both are perfectly obedient to the order 'Down charge' and the sign of the uplifted hand. It must, however, be distinctly understood that signs are what alone must be used when real hunting begins, and that when an order by mouth is given it should only be in a low voice, when the dog is near, and always accompanied by the sign of the hand. To shout at dogs in the field disturbs them greatly, and may make game wild. When dogs are near the sportsman verbal orders in a low tone are most valuable.

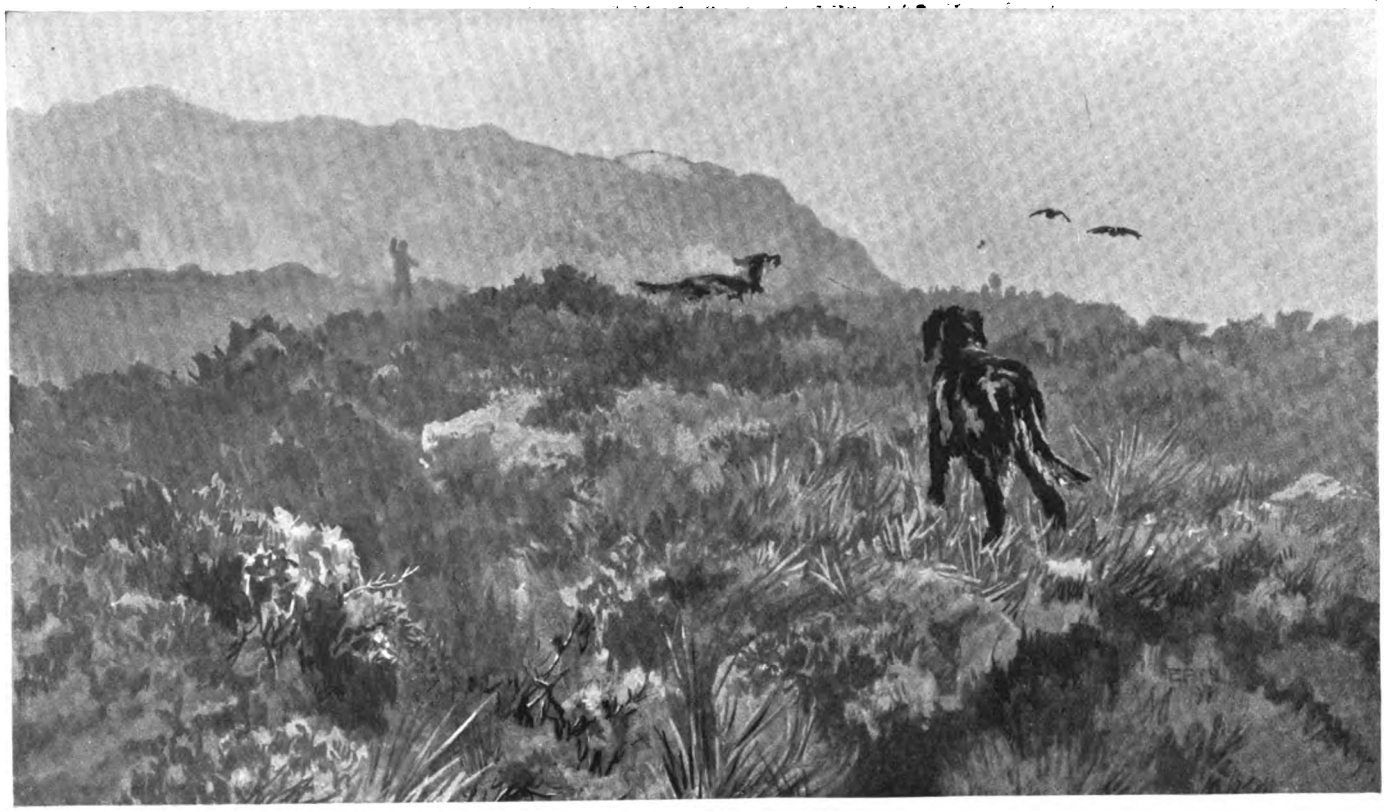
The next step is to take the pups out together and make them drop to hand, and this should be continued until they are quite perfect at it. The mother may then be allowed to join, and when all three drop at the same instant, no matter how far from the trainer, the lesson may be considered learnt, and another step taken, which is to make the pup lie still where he is while the trainer walks away from him. Untiring patience and good temper can alone teach this most difficult lesson, for time after time the pup follows, and has to be pressed down in the exact spot where he received the order. When the trainer can walk nearly out of sight and his pupil still keeps his place, the lesson may be considered finished.

So at last mother and children can be taken out with confidence, and allowed to romp to their hearts' content, for the raised hand will now drop them all without fail, nor will they rise till the sweeping wave of the hand tells them that they are to 'Hold up,' which in dog language means to go on. This order and sign should be well understood, for if the dogs are 'to heel,' these words spoken quite low will be sufficient to release them.

The pups are now big and strong, and able to do long walks, and as the shooting season has begun we can bring them to some place where they can hear guns, taking care that the first report is not too close to them. We must wait till next spring to show them game regularly, and for the present be content to follow a shooting party with our pups in couples and on a chain. We keep up our daily walks, and go into all kinds of places, including the narrow streets of the neighbouring town, where our pups can learn not to be run over. A friendly cabman gives us great help in this matter, for as he drives along one of the pups is saved from death or great injury by a well-directed cut of the whip, which we signed to the driver to administer. The cabman was no loser by his promptness of action, which certainly made the punished pup careful in future, and impressed his sister to be so too by his yell of pain; and carriages were ever after given a wide berth. To try by speaking to save any dog from being run over is a very dangerous practice, and owners of dogs, no matter of what breed, should never attract a dog's attention when it is in danger. The wheel may actually touch a dog, yet the nervous system is so highly developed in all healthy dogs that no accident will occur. A word may distract his attention at the critical moment, and the wheel crush him.

The small amount of whipping that had been necessary to check evident disobedience had been given with a thin switch when the pups were very young, and the severe stroke of the cabman's whip was peculiarly astonishing and painful, as we wanted it to be.

To teach our pups to walk decorously through a town in couples has not been an entirely easy thing to do; for, when first attempted, the application of the couples was the signal for a headlong rush, which often terrified children, and at last earned a sound flogging. This was the one and only flogging administered since the pups had come to years of discretion. We never carry a whip, for its crack is disturbing, and this punishment was given with a light cane weighted at one end for throwing



WILD AND STEADY

—a most useful instrument, as will be shown. The weighted end was not used on the dog.

So the winter comes, and the dogs are always our companions; we talk to them often, and are all the greatest friends. How they love the snow, tearing through it, shovelling it up, and lying down in it! We do not take them to skate with us, for they might have their toes cut off, or become fatally chilled by standing about on the ice. Their mother once got a terrible cramp from being too long in the water and then not running about enough to keep herself warm. She frightened us, after her rigid sides had been softened by rubbing, by biting her owner in the leg, and setting off across country after swimming the river. We certainly thought it was a case of hydrophobia; the bite was sucked by one of the party, who is still alive and well, and a quick runner went to the nearest chemist, two miles away, for caustic. Next day she turned up, and lived for many years afterwards. This is only noticed to show that dogs can be seriously affected by chill, which no doubt in her case brought on cramp and apparent madness.

The winter now begins to melt into spring, the partridges are pairing, and the grass grows green. Our daily walks are always kept up, and one day the mother stops dead in the road, and the pups are evidently highly interested. She steals along and goes through the hedge, and we follow, all three dogs working well, across a field of rough grass with a marshy soil. Again the mother stops, the pups imitate her, and have also got the scent. It is now that every movement of the young dogs must be watched. Up get a brace of partridge, and up goes the hand with the order 'Down charge.' The voice was only used because, from the position of one of the pups, the hand could not be seen. All three lie down, and are severally complimented upon their performance. This has been a most valuable lesson, for although game has been scented before in our walks, we have not had until now such a regular hunt. Both pups are now advanced enough to go out in turn in the field with their mother for a full day's work

At half-past nine on a misty morning we start on a three-mile walk to some capital ground, the mother and daughter being the two chosen for the day. The road walk is taken leisurely; after the first half-mile both are motioned to heel, and stalk solemnly along. The sun since we started has shown his face, the mist is nearly gone, the damp grass will soon be dry, and allow the birds to lie close. We cross the stile, the

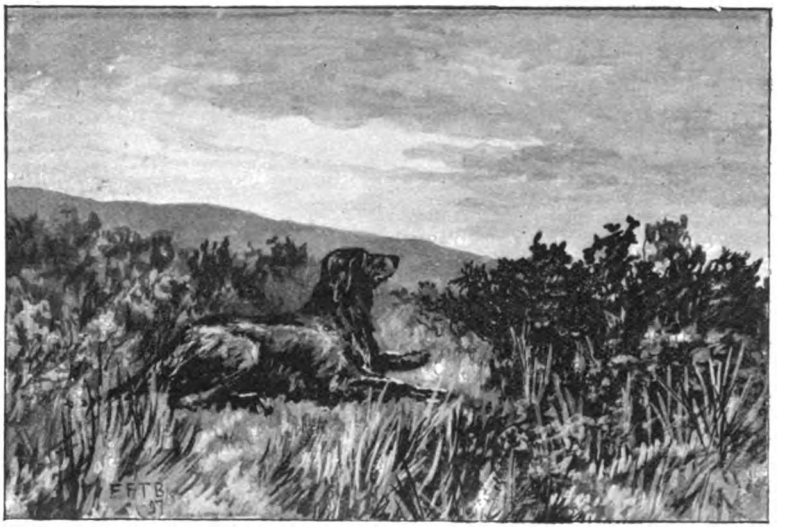
setters still to heel, and when thirty yards or so from the road are given permission in a low voice to 'Hold up,' the under and forward sweep of the hand not being forgotten.

Off they go at full speed, the mother quartering the ground well to right and left with the pup in close attendance. It will soon be time enough to get them to keep apart, and take different sides; at present, however, it is best to let the pup hunt with her mother, and not apart from her. Dogs that are accustomed to their master always keep an eye on his face, and hold their position by constantly watching it; so by merely turning the face the trainer can direct the dog to move in another direction, although he keeps straight on in his own line. Anyone who looks at a sombrely dressed crowd must be struck with the brightness of the human face, and artists know very well how extremely difficult it is to give the true sheen to skin in their pictures. With bright surroundings, too, the human face is always prominent, even at a long distance from the observer.

Nothing in this field, and the dogs wait at the hedge, for they never cross one before their master, unless told to do so. We make for the gate in the next field, after scrambling through a hole in the bottom of the hedge, and are pleased to see, when we near the fence, that the pup has actually got the scent of game, and is craning her neck and staring anxiously before her. The mother, twenty yards off, backs her point and sets dead. Nothing now but the pup must be looked at. We give a low whistle to attract her attention, she sees the upraised hand, and lies down. Getting behind her, we walk silently and quickly up, motioning to the mother to come too, and encouraging her to go forward. The pup now follows the mother, who drops as the birds rise with a loud whirr. The pup, however, startled by the noise, looks scared for a moment, but drops to the uplifted hand. So far all has gone well, but the moment the dogs are again on foot a hare jumps up under their noses, and off goes the pup at full speed. The mother is 'Down charge' again, although looking anxiously after her daughter. We rate the pup the instant she sets off, without avail, and as the hare goes through the fence two hundred yards away the pup loses sight of her, a loud whistle calls her to attention, and she drops to hand. We go to her, leaving the mother where she is, and show by our manner how very wrong we consider her conduct to have been. Collar and chain are put on as a punishment, and we lead her back to where she

broke away. Here we press her down, repeating her early lesson, telling her in an injured tone what we think. She is very penitent and very miserable, and so we lead her until the mother stands again, then both of us back her point. This backing of the trainer, by the way, is a great help to young dogs, and was taught us by one of the best sportsmen that ever lived. Dogs certainly perceive that the man is sharing their labour, and this has the effect of steadying them, whether they be young or old.

And here it is well to mention that in finding dead or wounded game, a setter-like action on the part of the man is of the



LYING DOWN IN HEATHER

utmost assistance. The appearance of a man and dog setting is comic, but it is good practice for all that.

We now pass through a great grass-field full of sheep, and let the pup go. and our two dogs are off as usual at full speed, startling the sheep for a moment as they rush through them. We take every opportunity that offers itself to make sure that dogs are not wild, and especially should sheep-worrying be made an impossibility by instruction when young.

A hare gets up in the next field, the mother drops, the daughter only half, looking wistfully after the retreating form. 'Ware hare' is the order, said sternly with uplifted hand, and being near her, we seize our unsteady pupil and press her down

again, applying collar and chain. We find more birds, and notice how quickly the pup improves; but alas! another hare is fairly coursed, and this time a whipping with the light cane is given. No more hares are run after for the rest of the day.

It is now three o'clock, and we have done enough; when we get home mother and brother express the wildest joy, and next day they have a turn. This pup is steadier than his sister, indeed his conduct is better than that of most dogs that are said to be trained, and even the tantalising bouncing along of a hare fails to demoralise him. His great mistakes were setting larks and a wren, but he did not look as if he thought that real game was in front of him. It was not so necessary to drop him to hand as it was in the case of his sister, because he is naturally less excitable, and it is well to avoid making the dogs lie down on a set, for they are more easily seen when standing. The red setter is especially difficult to see when lying down in heather, or near some fallen tree or other dark object. Still, to keep dogs in hand, nothing is more effectual than dropping them if they are too wild.

We arrange a day with a friend who also is fond of training his own dogs, and we start off together with our four pups. The first field is drawn blank, and we devote ourselves to checking the wildness of the quartet. In the next field, while still intent on their behaviour, one of his dogs sets, and the other three back his point very well. All four are curiously placed at the corners of an imaginary square, and no coaxing will move any one of them forward. It seems impossible for anything to hide in such a bare place, so dogs and men gaze into the square until a large hare jumps up in the very middle and makes off at full speed.

Our friend's two dogs are nearest, and dash after the long-legged one, followed, after a moment's hesitation, by one of ours, whose brother, however, drops to the upraised hand. But flesh and blood cannot stand such temptation, the warning words 'Down charge' are unheeded; he, too, raises himself up to watch the hunt, and at last sets off after the pack. He passes us, entirely intent on the chase, and if not stopped will lose much that he has learnt. The small stick with the heavy end now comes in handy, and we hurl it at him, the point striking his flank, and the rest of the stick lying along his side with a stinging crack. The stroke is hard enough, for he is only ten yards off, and drops to the hand. Such good fortune can seldom happen, but the trainer can invent many ways of showing a dog when he

is doing wrong without the heavy machinery of check lines and puzzle pegs. The sting of a few shot from a 'tweaker,' commonly called a catapult, is most startling to a dog, and most effective, as the blow is mysterious and unexpected. Care, of course, should be taken not to use this weapon if there is any fear of striking the eyes.

Now this stopping of a dog from running in is a most delicate business, for too much rating and checking makes him nervous and dependent. A child that is constantly told that he must not do this and that gets to feel that he can never be right, and loses self-confidence, and a dog is in many ways very like a trouble-

NEAR SOME FALLEN TREE

some child, and must be handled with the greatest care and consideration.

So the three runaways are suitably punished, and the flogging that our friend gives his two has an indirect effect on ours, who look on with evident sympathy,

We need not enter into the value of flogging, but there are some men who know when to flog and do no harm thereby, and there are others, and they are the great majority, who should use this severe form of punishment very sparingly indeed. Generally speaking, however, dogs that are constantly flogged are very unsatisfactory, and either hopelessly wild or pottering. The wildest of our two became, in the end, entirely manageable;

he would give up hunting in a moment if required to do so, and walk 'to heel.' In fact, if the sportsman is absolute master the wildest dog can be made steady at last.

We were now anxious to try the pups against a brace trained by a rough but knowing sort of man—we had heard him accused of poaching—who lived in another part of the country, and as we had the good fortune to be in his neighbourhood soon afterwards, arranged with him a morning's beat. He brought out a pointer and a setter, and we could see at once that his dogs were not such high rangers as our own, though the pointer was certainly a good dog. His setter seemed out of sorts, and did not appear to have a good nose. The pointer was the first to stand to game, and all four behaved well as the birds rose. We came soon to a field of wheat stubble cut by hand, but his pointer failed to acknowledge the presence of birds, and passed far out from left to right of our line, closely followed by our setter dog, who began roading with head high in air.

Our poaching friend insisted there could be nothing, as his dog had only just passed the place, but he had to acknowledge that he was wrong in a very few minutes, when our other setter and his dog backed the point, and the birds rose. His setter had been taken up early in the hunt, as something was evidently wrong with her. His pointer seemed to make mistakes simply from not having been encouraged to range boldly, for he was a capital dog.

Quick, bold ranging makes a dog careful, whereas slow and cautious quartering of the ground makes him often uncertain.

It may be that as good play at cricket, or golf, or football is fostered by boldness and promptness of decision, so good work in the field may be got from the dog who has been encouraged to go fast and true. Perpetual whistling at football players or dogs must cramp their action and powers of resource, and mistakes often teach what no theory can.

The term 'breaking in' has not been used in this article, for too often has it proved to be the 'breaking down' of all spirit and go in dogs.

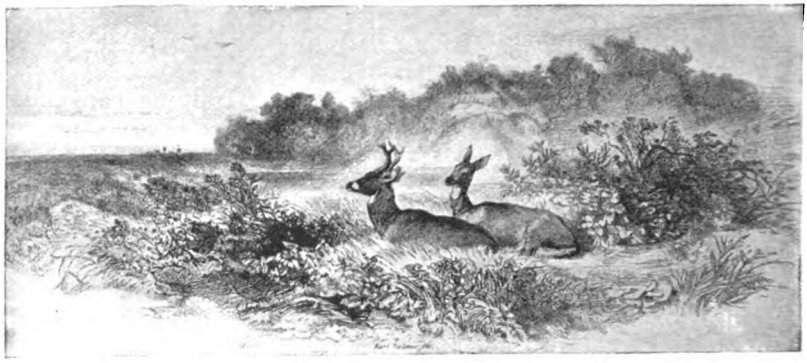
As to gun-shyness in dogs, it would appear that some are as naturally gun-shy as some men are, and that the shock on the drum of the ear is unbearable. Gradual introduction to the report of a gun by cracking caps at meal-time, and increasing the noise by the addition of a small charge of powder, is a safe way to proceed. There are, however, dogs that are hopelessly gun-

shy, but it is a consolation to know that they do not necessarily hand this weakness down to their children.

We have tried to show what sport dog training can afford to those lucky people who have the opportunity to carry it out. Spring, summer, autumn, and winter all come pleasantly to the outdoor man, and if dogs are his companions, no days are dull. The townsman dreads a shower, but to the countryman it is only one of the many changes that he delights in, and what are called the dull days of autumn are to him and his dogs days of pleasure.

The training of pointers and setters should be continued during the life of the dog; for although small bags may be the result of what most would now call waste of time in shooting, still every bird killed over well-trained dogs would have, at the end of the day, an interesting history.

The ranging, the set, the roading and backing, the kill, the reloading while the dogs are 'Down charge,' the renewed hunt and find, all afford a period of varied interest.



CHASING THE ROE

BY THE HON. A. E. GATHORNE-HARDY

'I WATCHED a roe,' says St. John, in a well-known passage of his 'Wild Sports of the Highlands,' 'stripping the leaves off a long bramble shoot.' 'My rifle was aimed at his heart, and my finger was on the trigger, but I made some excuse or other to myself for not killing him, and left him undisturbed. His beauty saved him.' I am afraid that with most sportsmen on the war-path the sporting aspect is apt to prevail over the æsthetic, and they do not often show the same forbearance as the genial author of the brightest of sporting records; but if beauty could prevail to soften the heart, no animal would be more likely to reach old age than a roebuck.

What a beautiful thoroughbred-looking creature he is—a very fairy of the woods! A roe, threading his path through birch and bracken, or standing for a moment in some open glade with graceful head turned towards the intruder, looks, what he is, no trespasser, but tenant in fee by right of birth and prescription as one of the oldest inhabitants. His big brother the stag is perhaps a grander object, but as far as grace of motion is concerned clumsy in comparison. His dappled cousin the fallow buck may have come over before the Conqueror, but is undoubtedly a foreign intruder of Asiatic origin, although he has been sufficiently long settled in his adopted home to acquire all the rights and privileges of an English citizen, including the doubtful advantage of having paid toll to Robin Hood and his merry men

in Sherwood Forest, and tithe to the Church in the person of Friar Tuck. Still, these country cousins must be content with a respectful recognition of their charms, quite different from the hearty admiration which any true John Bull or Sandy bestows upon his indigenous kinsman. They shared the society and

OUR PALÆOLITHIC ANCESTOR

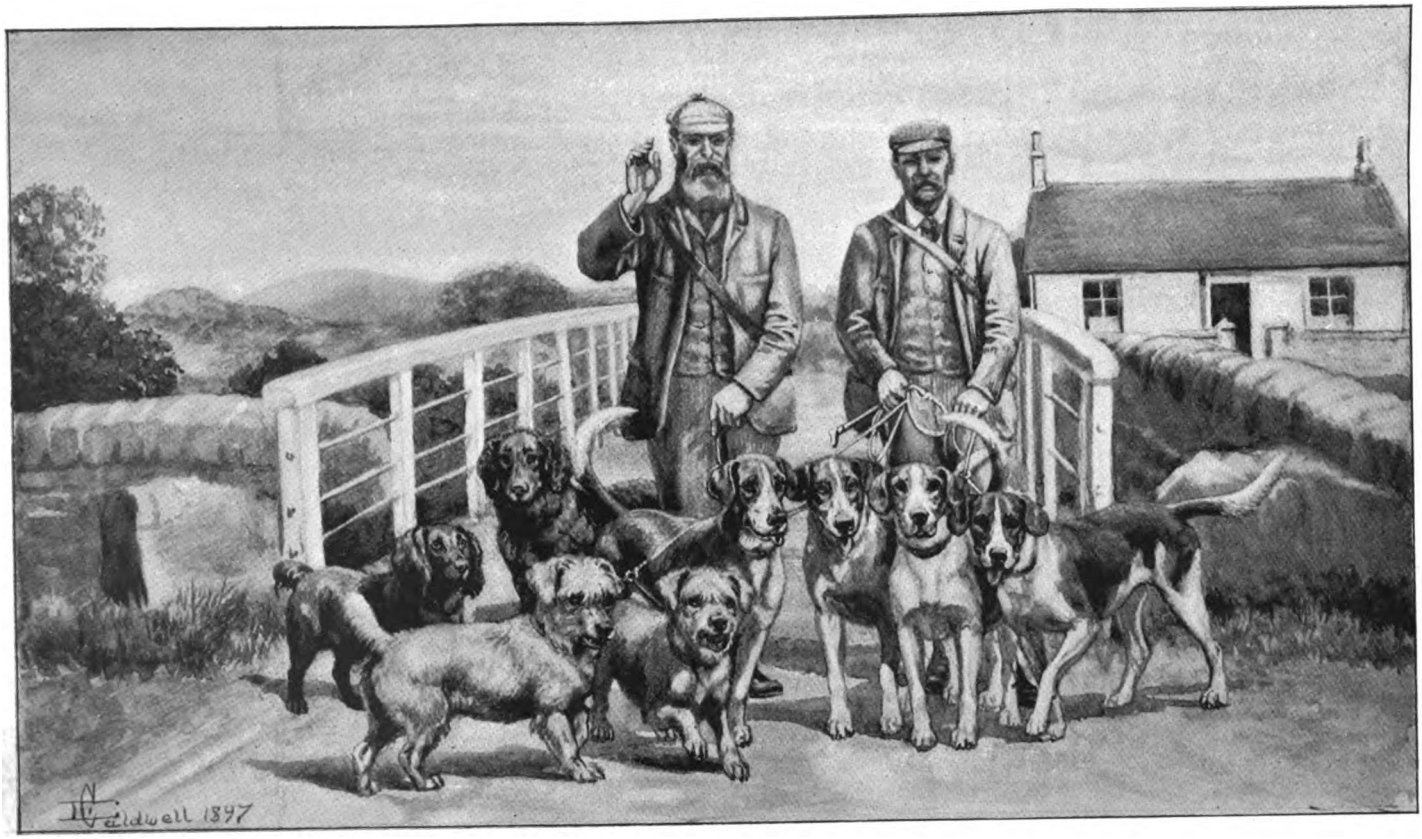
provided the food and clothing of our palæolithic ancestors, and their bones and horns are found in cave and tumulus with those of hyæna and bear, along with the flint arrowheads and knives which killed and skinned them. And if the claim of ancient lineage and descent is not acknowledged in this revolutionary

age, the roe can appeal to the sympathies of the most ardent democrat on the ground of his unquenchable love of liberty. Stag and hind, fallow buck and doe, take kindly enough to a semi-domestic life, and are familiar objects in parks and paddocks all over England; but the roe does not readily brook confinement within a narrow fence, running round and round, seeking an outlet for escape, until death terminates his captivity. I believe there are still a few roe in some very large parks, such as Windsor and Petworth; but in the former of these, at any rate, it is probable that the roe existed long before it was enclosed, and such apparent exceptions only prove the rule.

Although they do not appreciate confinement in a paddock, it is easy to tame a fawn, and it makes a delightful pet until it attains to years of indiscretion. A tame roe used to follow the children everywhere round the old castle of Duntroon, and even up the stairs and into the rooms. One of his little playfellows had been obliged to give up his room to a gentleman who had come to stay there, and the surprise of the guest was unbounded when the head and neck of a roe protruded through his half-open door. 'Dear me!' he said; 'game must be extremely plentiful in these parts!'

Yet just as a kitten would be the most delightful of pets except for its unfortunate habit of growing into a cat, so a roe, and especially a buck, becomes too much of a handful as a pet when it grows up. Their beautiful little horns are both sharp and dangerous, and a tame roebuck very nearly put an old woman off the road and into the Crinan Canal by its obtrusive attentions. It meant no harm: it really expected to get a lump of the rock salt with which it had usually been rewarded for its caresses; but the old dame did not appreciate its uncanny approaches, and narrowly escaped with her life.

Opinions differ as to the merits of the roe from the point of view of the sportsman, but this, I think, is mainly owing to the fact that so many are killed in the course of the winter battues. No doubt they add an element of the picturesque to the bag as they are arranged in line before the door of the lodge, with blackcock, woodcocks, pheasants, hares and rabbits, and perhaps a few odd capercailzie; but I for one would always prefer not to pull the trigger of a shot-gun at an object like a calf, although I have had many an interesting and exciting day after them with the rifle. It is true that 'old masters' like Colquhoun and St. John agree in recommending shot as preferable to ball for roe-shooting, on the ground that fewer are wounded; but



THE PACK

those who humanely take the advice of these writers do not sufficiently appreciate the great advance which has been made since their time in the manufacture of weapons of precision, of improved range, velocity, and accuracy, combined with lower elevation. I do not profess to be a first-rate shot with a rifle, but I do not remember losing a single wounded buck, although I have accounted for a very large number during the last twenty-five years. The hounds, if you have them with you, or even retrievers or spaniels, soon come up to a roe with a bullet in his body; but, although a charge of No. 5 shot aimed well forward will roll one over like a rabbit, young sportsmen are apt to get excited when the beaters shout 'Deer forward!' and many shots are fired when, owing to the thickness of the cover or the distance of the object, there is no reasonable chance of securing the quarry. I believe that many carry away a few pellets under such circumstances, and that if the roe could be consulted in the matter they would unhesitatingly express their preference for the bullet.

Perhaps the most amusing way of shooting roe, when the ground is suitable, is for the guns to take up positions on heights commanding fairly open glades in the woods, where the cover can be drawn by hounds. The scent is very strong, and almost any kind of dogs take to it kindly, but a scratch pack of otter-hounds, or old or slow fox-hounds, are the best for the purpose. A really fast pack would drive the roe too quick and too far. The object should be to get together a few steady hounds with plenty of 'tongue,' resolute on the scent, with perhaps some bustling terriers to start the buck out of the thickets and bracken. Unless too much pressed, roe are inclined to trust more to cunning than to speed, while their habit of running in a circle and their disinclination to break cover give the sportsmen every chance. But perhaps my readers will best be able to judge of the nature of the sport if I describe one of the many occasions when not merely my heart, but my body as well, has been 'in the Highlands' 'a-chasing the deer.'

It is a splendid September morning in the much-slandered climate of Argyleshire, clear shining after rain, and the waggonette with its load of sportsmen bowls cheerily along the straight level road across the Crinan Moss in the direction of the Canal. On the right, Jura, Scarba, and the high hills of Mull show themselves across the bay. The tide is low as we cross the bridge over the Add, a small fleet of mergansers are making their way up stream, the exposed sandbanks are crowded with gulls and

plovers, while two or three solemn-looking herons, knee-deep in water, are enjoying 'the contemplative birds' recreation.' A short turn to the left along the road between the Crinan Canal and the beautiful wooded and fern-clad brae brings us to Dunardry Lock, the place where the keepers are waiting for us, and where the 'Linnet' has just arrived with her cargo of passengers from the North. The usual miscellaneous-looking collection of tourists are disporting themselves on the bank, while some are offering a feeble resistance to a small band of infant marauders who are pestering them to purchase milk, fern roots, bunches of heather, and 'sweeties,' or frankly demanding blackmail without any offer of an equivalent; others, with legitimate curiosity, are inspecting the queer-looking scratch lot that are straining at their couples on the bridge. Well may they wonder what the pack is intended to pursue, composed as it is of four fox-hounds, a draft from the York and Ainstey, two light-coloured wire-haired terriers of our own particular breed, a small Sussex spaniel, and York, an ancient black retriever, stone deaf and grey about the muzzle, but good for a year or two of work still. The party descend from the 'machine' and equip and arm themselves with waterproofs, rifles, flasks, and lunch. Barnakil, the wood we mean to hunt to-day, is one of those old natural birch woods which are becoming yearly rarer, in consequence of the ravages of the sheep; but which formerly clothed half the brae faces in Argyleshire. The leader of the party leaves us to take up a position where a small hillock covered with old Scotch firs overlooks a queer boggy flat surrounded by covert on all sides, and intersected with open drains and burns; and as he takes his seat among a heap of boulders, I can see how well his grey suit harmonises with its surroundings. He measures nearly six foot and a half in his stockings, but his by no means scant proportions are almost invisible before I have got very far from him. The next to leave me is one who has watched for the roe on these hills long before I did, knows every pass in the wood, and can conjecture the probable course of a hunted buck almost infallibly. A truer sportsman never existed—alas! that I should have to use the past tense. In the hunting-field, by the salmon river, in the grouse butts or at a hot corner, equally trustworthy; best known, perhaps, in his later years on the racecourse, where he loved to see Queen's Birthday, Nunthorpe, and other horses bred by himself carry his colours to victory, although he seldom made a bet. He takes up his position on the brae face to the right, while I hurry on to my pass, which I reach about noon. We did not make a

HE STANDS A MOMENT

very early start, nor was it necessary to do so; four or five hours' hunting is quite enough to exhaust the capacities of a limited pack. The heathery ridge where I take my place stands high in the centre of the wood, overlooking on all sides little valleys, or rather glades, through which the roe are likely to pass; but, although I can see well from my point of vantage, it will be necessary to keep a sharp look-out, as the colour of a roe's hide bears a strong protective resemblance to the tint of the bracken, now rapidly turning brown, and there is more or less covert everywhere around me of which the light-footed beasts will be sure to take every advantage. They will not draw attention to their presence when hunted, as do the blundering fallow deer, flitting noiselessly past like ghosts of that variety which does not indulge in blood-curdling groans and clanking of chains; but, quiet as they may be, I can hear something already—the deep notes of Wayward and Valorous; and I instinctively clutch my rifle as they seem at first to be coming in my direction. I catch just a glimpse of a tawny skin crossing the hill about a quarter of a mile behind me, and then of the two hounds; but soon they seem to have changed their direction, and a loud report, followed by an ominous silence, tells me that I am not likely to see that roe alive, and that I have a little leisure to look about me. To the West, across the flat peat moss, I can see the mouth of the Add spanned by the bridge we recently crossed, with the low part of Jura just visible behind. In the far north the double peak of Ben Cruachan is just visible as a pale shadow above another range of hills. The wild blue rock pigeons are flying to and fro along the slaty cairn which bounds the glade immediately below me, while overhead cormorant, gull, and heron are winging a stately and steady flight between Lochs Fyne and Crinan. But already the hounds are giving tongue again, and I must attend to business.

About three hundred yards away some sheep take a short scamper, then gather in a cluster, and stare in their silly way in the direction from which the hounds are coming. No doubt the roe is there, but he is keeping under the height; for I fail to catch a sight of him until, a few minutes later, he suddenly appears daintily tripping towards me along the very ridge on which I am seated in ambush, and stopping now and again to listen. He is not more than two hundred yards away, and I can see that he is a buck, and a good one too. He stands for a moment uncertain what course to pursue; there certainly is danger behind him, but he also seems to have a sort of instinctive knowledge of

something not altogether right in front. I get a good look at him with my field-glasses, and admire the beautiful little head, which has its full complement of six points. Unless he turns, those graceful horns ought to be mine, for he can hardly fail to pass within sixty yards of me, and although he is not a very large mark I am comfortably seated, and have not the breathless stalker's excuse for a wide shot, nor the novice's stumbling-block of excitement. Another minute and he has started at the renewed music of the hounds, and is passing at a swift but easy trot broadside below me. St. Hubert direct my aim! I pull the trigger, and the ball of the express strikes him a little far back, but fortunately not enough so to damage his haunch, and he sinks to rise no more.

Leaving my rifle, I scramble down the stones through the brushwood, and have just time to administer the *coup de grâce* before the dogs arrive, and to chide them back in the direction of the keepers before they can tear the flesh of the dead roe It is not always prudent to leave one's rifle behind. On a former occasion I was not so fortunate. A roebuck had crossed me at the very pass I now occupy, not twenty yards off, and I rolled him over and over; but when I had almost got up to him, he jumped up and bolted off as if nothing had happened, and 'I was left lamenting.' No doubt the ball had either struck his horn or just grazed the spine, merely stunning him for a moment, for I could detect no trace of a wound upon him with my glass as he galloped away; and he got clear off, though the hounds were close upon his trail.

By the time I have done justice to the excellent lunch, consisting of half a cold grouse, a buttered roll, and a slice of cake, washed down with a little whisky and water, at least two more roe have passed me within range; in one case age and in the other sex protected them. In neither instance were they being hunted, but they had evidently been disturbed either by the dogs or the keepers, and were trying to steal away. How easily that little buck, with mere buttons of horns, negotiated the stone dyke below, with the wire on the top of it! The doe knows her way about better, and does not take the trouble to jump the fence, but makes straight for the little passage through the dyke, which arches over a small stream hardly big enough to be dignified with the title of burn. I am half through a meditative pipe before the flight of three or four blackgame and a late woodcock heralds the approach of the keepers with terriers, retriever, and two of the hounds coupled

up. They report progress: another buck has been killed, and the two other hounds are away after a big one which has taken right across the moss to Ballimore. Probably they will have lost him when he crossed the river, and will be coming back by this time. Donald is off after them with orders to meet them at the far end of the wood near Dunadd, and they

How easily the little Buck negotiates the Stone Dyke

are going round there to hunt the covert back this way. They will not let the remaining hounds go unless a fair buck is started, as we are short-handed as it is, and cannot afford to lose any more time after does and small trash.

So the day passes, with varied incident, and when we make our way to the road at about half-past four, we have got alto-

gether four bucks and a good yeld doe, the latter of which fell to the shot-gun of the youngest of the party, who had been stationed near the edge of a young plantation of firs, with orders to kill anything he could, as they were 'doing mischief' there. A good bag, but nothing to compare with those of thirty years ago, when the roe literally swarmed in all the natural woods round the Canal. Then, however, they were greatly encouraged and preserved for the benefit of the lady of Poltalloch, who was a most deadly shot with a pea-rifle, and devoted to the sport of hunting the roe. Then, also, the pack was far more complete, and many legends are still handed down by oral tradition of the feats of Towler the old otter-hound, who never left the scent, and, when he was bidden to a roe-hunt, frequently interpreted the invitation like Mr. Jorrocks—'where I dines I sleeps'—and returned in the morning after a day and night out, dissipated-looking, rotund, but contented.

There is a legend, for which I decline to vouch, that he once pursued a roe for three days, and that the two were seen about twenty yards apart, looking as if neither could go an inch further.

It is pleasant enough, too, to stroll through the woods of an evening, and look out for the roe in the open spaces. Many a good buck has fallen to my rifle in Kilchurn banks, Bar-na-slue, and Kilbride; but it is not so easy now to get quietly through the woods as it was before the succession of gales denuded whole hill-sides of their plantations, twisting and knotting the great fir-trees like spillikins. Till then the paths were beautifully kept, but it has taken years to make them at all practicable, and for a long time they were in many places quite impassable. A rook rifle is good enough for a steady shot at this work. For a roe-hunt I prefer an express, as one may have to fire long shots at uncertain ranges, and often at a moving object; but, stealing through the woods and coming upon the deer at shorter distances and quite undisturbed, it is easy enough to put a small bullet in a fatal spot. Even if a buck is startled by seeing you before you catch sight of him, he is so curious that he is almost sure to stand to look round, after running a few steps, sufficiently long to give you a good chance. Mr. Egremont Lascelles, who used to be particularly fond of a still stalk, and was most successful at the sport, told me a curious incident which occurred to him when after roe. He came upon a buck standing in an open space in one of the Poltalloch woods, and saw that it was looking at him. He advanced cautiously with his rifle cocked to see how near to it he could approach, and, to his unbounded surprise, it allowed him

to walk right up to it, take it by the horn, and put the knife into its throat. Of course he supposed that it had been wounded or that there was something the matter with it, but it turned out to be in perfectly good condition, with all its organs healthy, and without a sign or symptom of so much as a scratch.

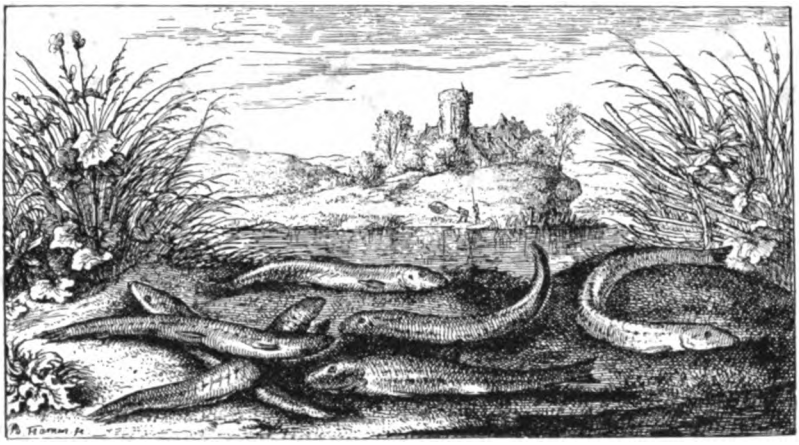
The wood immediately behind Poltalloch has been long

A COMPLETE SANCTUARY FOR ROE

maintained as a complete sanctuary for roe, no shot being fired at them there. As a consequence, they have always been both numerous and tame there. It is hardly possible to pass through any of the short walks behind the garden without seeing one or more of these graceful creatures, and many a time have I taken aim at them as I returned from an afternoon after the rabbits in

the cairn, but of course never drew trigger. They are not taken in by the apparent danger, as they are quite aware of the regulations of the establishment, and buck, doe, and fawn alike face the deadly tube with a confidence bred of the knowledge that in that wood it is quite innocuous. Long may they flourish there unharmed, giving infinite pleasure to all who delight in studying wild nature!

It is perhaps rather a bathos to turn from their æsthetic and sporting qualities to gastronomic uses. I cannot say that I personally have a very high opinion of the flesh of roe as food. It differs in flavour from venison, mutton, or hare, although it has a smack of each and all. Dressed *à la Chasseur* with preserved cherries it is very good, and a haunch larded with a little mutton-fat is palatable; but my mind recoils with horror from Colquhoun's suggestion that bucks ought to be shot in the winter, when they have lost their horns, because they are then better eating. For my part, I would rather have one fine roe's head than a wilderness of haunches; and as my eye rests gratefully on some of my beautiful trophies, I do not envy the base epicurean who would sacrifice such lasting pleasure for the doubtful privilege of feasting on inferior mutton.



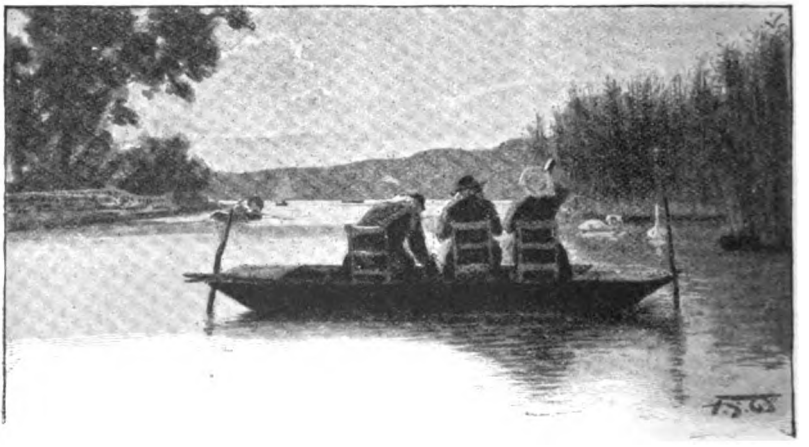
RAMBLING ANGLING REMINISCENCES

BY ALEXANDER INNES SHAND

ONE great point in favour of the gentle craft is that the angler has an abiding joy in recollections. He may be crippled by rheumatism from imprudent wading; he may have become a martyr to gout, thanks to generous indulgence in correctives, or stress of circumstances may have compelled him to accept a consulship at Timbuctoo or Kiatcha, where water in any shape is conspicuous by its scarcity. But the lively imagination or the poetic sensibility with which all brothers of the craft are notoriously gifted will conjure up many a scene of the vanished past, none the less pleasant that he may have often walked back from them with a light or an empty basket. Yet at home or abroad, in touring or in holiday-making, it is always wise and well to wander about with an object. There is nothing to be said against making a pursuit of science, art, or archæology—of illuminated manuscripts or of rare editions. Men of many tastes have a multiplicity of crotchets, and, as Solomon remarks, there are seasons for everything. But in the spring or the early summer time, when the leaves are green and the rippling streams and the songsters are blending in sylvan melody, a rod is the young man's best companion—the rod that, wielded by a skilful hand, may be warranted to hold anything in reason. It has more than the magic of the mystic wand of wych elm which moves in sympathy

with the bubbling of subterraneous springs; for if he only forget his guide books, and follow the bent of that fishing-rod, it is sure to take him into romantic scenery.

Tastes differ, and, according to the time-honoured traditions of the craft, no one can pretend to be an accomplished angler who is not indefinitely endowed with patience and perseverance. Yet a man may take to angling as a volatile amateur, although he may have a dash of mercury in the veins and be sickened for the moment by disappointment. He may be even weak-kneed enough to use the rod as a mere excuse for indulging a dissipated habit of roving. Personally I could never rise to enthusiasm sitting in a punt secured between a pair of 'rypecs,' and bobbing for unsophisticated groundlings over a bottom carefully baited. Nor



SAT MOORED IN MIDSTREAM

have I ever envied the great masters of the mighty salmon rod, who return year after year to the same short stretch of water, *salmi reich* as the famous pools may be, and rich in recollections of hard-fought contest. I have seen these gentlemen travelling down to Tweed or Tay in nipping February snow-drift, with their feet on foot-warmers and their legs in rugs, and have thought with a shiver of the 'sport' they were eagerly expecting for the morrow. Yet even the superannuated punt fisher must have golden memories of the cloudless days when he sat moored in midstream off Walton or Thames Ditton, where the geraniums were glowing in the trim gardens on the shore, and the swans were floating stately between sky and shadow, off the osier beds skimmed by the swallows; and when the means of quenching a genial thirst

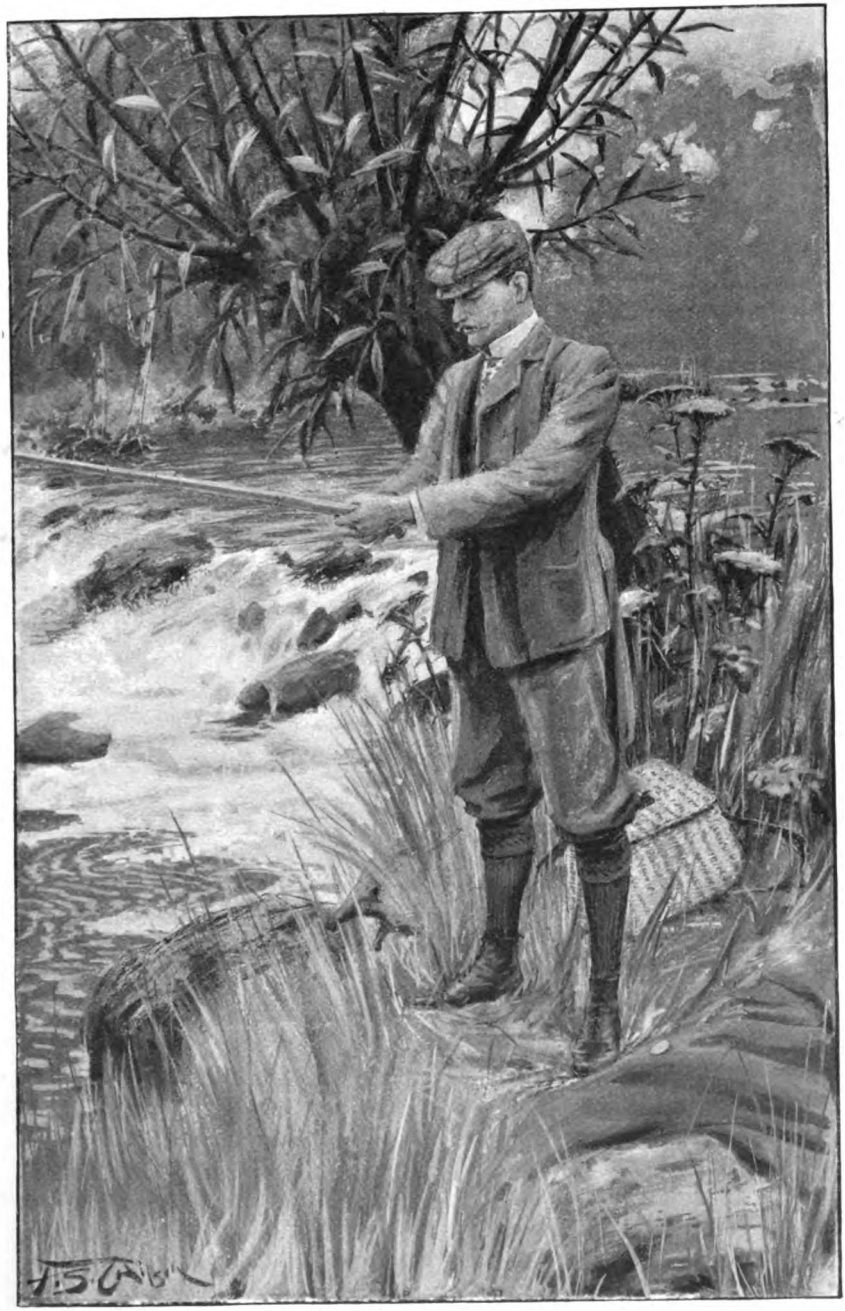
were at his elbow in bottomless jars of strong beer or cold punch. As for the lessee of the salmon reaches on Tweed or Tay, we do not do him the injustice to surmise that he never raises his eyes to the three-cleft Eildon, Ben Lawers, or Schiehallion. But the sublimest of views must stale with monotony, as we never could

THE PAINTING WAS PROMPTLY HUNG UP

sympathise with a departed diplomatic friend, who always travelled in the company of one of Raphael's Madonnas. He carried that platonic devotion to excess, for the painting was promptly hung up in the apartment in which he had broken the most hurried journey.

Izaak Walton would have been cheery and improving company, but I fear I should have found him an intolerably severe teacher if he had taken me out as a pupil on the Colne, or even in the picturesque woodlands by the Dove. For the moral of these rambling reminiscences is, that a man may be considerably nearer the duffer than the professor, he may be devoid of patience and destitute of perseverance, and yet manage to get much pleasure out of angling in the course of rambles devious and desultory. It is not the mere casting and killing he remembers, though such incidents cling marvellously to the memory. It is the endless associations that are the setting of the pictures—the old comrades, the chance meetings, the inns, the walks, the weather and the wettings.

The Scotch boy naturally begins with the small burns and the tiny trout. There is the mountain burn that has its springs in the heather or the black peat bog. In a dry summer, it trickles clear as crystal; after a burst of heavy rain it changes into foaming brown stout. Betwixt and between is the time to try it. The trout are abundant and innocent enough, and yet they must be approached with a certain discretion. The burn comes brawling down a rocky staircase, now rushing swiftly beneath the banks it has undermined, now swirling in the deep pots it has hollowed out. It is a style of fishing better suited to boyhood than to middle age. The burn must be fished upwards; there is seldom satisfactory foothold; the banks are bound together with the slippery roots of willow and alder, and the pools are overhung by the mountain-ash. The boy has no joints to speak of: he can wriggle himself along like the amphibious eel, nor has he regard for his waistcoat buttons or the knees of his trousers. He must see to it that he is shadowless as Peter Schemil or one gleam of sunshine may spoil the stalk. But with favourable conditions, throwing a short line with a stiff bit of rod, he may go on jerking out the troutlets hand over hand. There the worm is undoubtedly more deadly than the fly; but we could never sympathise with the worthy Walton in the benevolent indifference in which he dealt with live bait. Even if the brown-backed, speckle-bellied trout refuse to be allured, it is no great matter. There is always the quest for bird-nests of a May-day on the bosky and sedgy banks. The ring-ousel is flitting and piping, as it flutters from stone to stone; the water-wagtail is running up and down the patches of silvery gravel, assured that even a boy can mean it no harm, and the water-rats and voles are taking headers into the water. Nay, you may even chance to stumble upon an



A Rod is the Young Man's best Companion

otter, emboldened by long impunity from intrusion, who has lain up till the nightfall in some outlying holt behind a screen of roots and heather-drift.

As for the lightsome Lowland brook, where it meanders through copse and meadow, give us 'guddling.' On a blazing summer day, when the crystal pellucidity of the shrunken rill made angling impossible, what a luxury it was to strip off jacket and stockings, roll up the shirt-sleeves to the shoulder, and plunge in for the work! No need then to conceal yourself. The trout shot arrow-like upwards from the shallow where it had been basking, and you marked it down like a snipe or a partridge, beneath the broad flat stone, or into the hole where it burrowed like a rabbit. The stone was next to a certainty. With a hand on either side, the trout was tickled into the palm with the finger-tips. As for the hole, that was more of a hazard. It might be too narrow, too winding, or too long, when, if the wary quarry had a sense of humour, he would laugh at your futile efforts. Sometimes, too, when you went groping on speculation, the fishes had more decidedly the best of the joke. More than once, in place of clutching the toothless trout, we have been bitten to the bone by a vicious water-rat. There too, as on the burn of the hills, you go forward from sensation to sensation. There is the hunch-backed heron standing solemnly on one leg, but with all his strict attention to business, keeping a bright look-out for tres-passers on his privacy. You leave the bed where the little foot-bridge is thrown across the pool, and prospecting the rushy reach below, you see a family party of wildduck or a pair of primly dressed teal quacking and splashing. You may stalk them to the very brink with due precaution, till as the duck rise up into lumbering flight, they seem almost within reach of the arm. Once in their swing and well away, the pace is swift enough in all conscience. Then there was the mill with its moss-slated roof and its moss-grown wheel, with the deep water behind that was the very place for night-lines when the bait was not nibbled off by crafty eels, and the flowery meadowstrips, with the blue-bells and the marsh marigolds, and the trailing fringes of deep-blue water forget-me-nots. For the beauty of guddling was, that it could go forward in all seasons – from the shooting of the spruces to the ripening of the rowan berries, from the building of the rooks to the going of the swallows.

The course of the hill burn is lonely; nevertheless it is making approaches to the peopled Lowlands, and you may be within hearing of the sounds of civilisation. If you seek for the utter

desolation of solitude, you must go to the mountain tarn. It lies embosomed among the wild hills in heathery moors. Everywhere around are rugged peaks or frowning, beetle-browed, sullen heights, and you are oppressed by the sense of a brooding stillness. And yet the silence is not unbroken, but the sounds make the impression of stillness the more sensible. There are the croak of the carrion crow, the whistle of the whaup, and the more cheerful cry of the grouse cock, as he raises his crest on some heather knoll. The tarn literally swarms with trout, but the trout must have excessively hard times of it. For flies are scarce in these inclement latitudes, and what are the rare water-insects among so many? These tarn trout must have nearly solved the problem of how to live upon nothing. Test their keen appetite by launching the otter—a poaching and unsportsmanlike implement elsewhere, but here it is all fair and a beneficent institution to boot. The weighted board goes drifting before the gentle breeze, and the long line of fly-bobs is gradually extended. Forthwith there is a bubbling on the rippled surface of the lakelet like the mixing a seidlitz-powder. The starving trout are jumping by twos and threes at each lure of steel and feather, and with each leisurely voyage of the otter there is an almost miraculous draught of fishes. Sweet these lean little fishes are, for they have been starving on Highland gravel instead of fattening on Lowland mud; and frizzled in the saucepan with a sprinkling of oatmeal, they come in agreeably at a Highland breakfast. The pity is that they should run to excess in quantity when the quality is so good; but were it worth the while, that could easily be remedied by turning down pike to thin their swarms.

But we must hurry on from the abstract to the concrete—the angler is nothing if not philosophical—and recall some scenes in the lochs and rivers at home and abroad. There is the Aberdeenshire Dee—dear now to the angler in every sense, for the lucky riparian proprietors ask long rents for short reaches, and get them. Comparisons are odious, but there is no brighter river-side in Scotland, and the scenery is emphatically clean. From its sources in the Cairngorm, from the Linn to the bridge above Aberdeen which saw many a fight between Covenanters and Kingsmen, it rushes over a hungry soil, which nevertheless grows magnificent timber. Save at Dunkeld, and perhaps at Monymusk on the Don, there are few such stately firs in Scotland as those in the forest of Ballochbuie, and the Deeside folks maintain that it was the 'birks of Abergeldie'—not Aberfeldie—which Burns immortalised in song. Be that as it may, the silvery

birches, glistening like diamonds to each glance of sunshine, might charm a dyspeptic into enjoyment. Talking of dyspeptics, it is not only the soil that is hungry in that crisp mountain air. Well do we remember the inns in the olden time, before royalty had set a fashion and brought a railway in its train, and when the happy valley was little troubled by tourists. Then the good hosts at Ballater or Aboyne used to make each sportsman or angler their peculiar care; when you ballasted yourself with a breakfast of crimped salmon, mutton ham, scones and marmalade, and looked forward confidently after the day's work to the belated dinner, with the haunch of hill mutton and the salmon as before.

The old rhyme says truly that for fish and tree the Dee is twice as good as the Don. But the Don is a delightful river nevertheless, and there is excellent trouting and much romantic scenery on its upper waters. As for the salmon, they have never in living memory had a fair chance, thanks to the cruives which have been built across the stream, a mile or more above Byron's Bridge of Balgowrie. The sluices should be opened on the Sabbath, and possibly they are, but there are paper-mills and other flourishing abominations. These are less noxious perhaps than the 'industries' of Hawick or Galashiels, which have poisoned the fair streams of the Border where the Ettrick Shepherd and Old Christopher used to fill their creels. Yet we cannot say much for salmon fishing in the Don, though there are tempting pools that ought to be well tenanted. But there is charming trouting in the upper waters from 'the Paradise' of Monymusk, with its titanic silver firs, to the sub-highland scenery of Corgarff in the country of the Forbeses. We associate that district with musters of the stalwart Forbes men to march across to the Braemar Gathering; with wheaten scones, cranberry jam, grilled grouse and trout, box-beds, and the close bed-rooms smelling strong of spirits and lavender.

The Ythan, on the contrary, brings a waft of salted sea breezes, with an occasional storm blowing up from north-east, and howling round the chimney-pots in the village of Newburgh. For the estuary within the bar was famed for its sea-trout, which rose greedily in favourable conditions of wind and water. The little river was the favourite resort of angler-artists from the good town of Aberdeen. We have seen Phillips there—'Philip of Spain,' as he used to be styled for his partiality to Peninsular subjects—and we have met him and listened to his Borrow-like recollections in the Invercauld Arms at Braemar. But the great patron of that snug hostelry was the venerable Giles, a close and clever imitator of

Landseer, with a local individuality of his own. With his stags at bay, his speared otters, and his salmon on the fly-hook or the fatal cleik, he had adorned Lord Aberdeen's lodge at those Braes of Gight on the lands of Byron's maternal ancestors, and also the panels of the saloon in the 'Queen,' which used to ply between Edinburgh and the Orkneys. The paintings at the Gight Lodge may probably be there still, the panelling of the 'Queen' has doubtless disappeared, like Landseer's sporting decorations of Lord Henry Bentinck's lodge at Ardverikie, which perished in a conflagration where there was water and to spare, but neither hydrants nor a fire brigade.

Ythan and Ugie run stagnating in their upper courses through the cold fallows and bleak morasses of Buchan, swept by all the winds from Arctic icebergs. The eels are as much at home in the Ugie as at Biggleswade, if they have neither the size nor the savour of those of the Fens. Going west or north, it is a lively change to the rushing rivers of Inverness and Ross. There is the Beauly, where the late Lord Lovat made that marvellous catch of salmon which could only have been possible to an accomplished angler and an exceptionally muscular man. Wild and almost savage as its beauties are, where it sweeps round the Eilan Aigas, in Glenfarrar—the island prison where the notorious Simon Fraser confined the ladies he was in the habit of carrying off—the Beauly flows seaward through copsewood and well-kept hedgerows which are rather suggestive of Hampshire than the far-away North. Even in the midst of life we are in death, and it is not only the ruined Priory with the dilapidated tombs of knights and prelates that comes back as a *memento mori*. The 'Northern Defiance' made connections with the Southern night mail, leaving the Caledonian Hotel at Inverness at an unholy hour in the morning. The balmy breath from the Beauly and the back-drift of the briny fragrance from the weed-strewn shore always acted like the air from the Enchanted Ground on Bunyan's pilgrims. For the life of us, we could not keep awake on the box-seat, and were only saved from what in the South would have come to a coroner's inquest by the friendly coachman, when he took a pull upon his horses, violently jerking his elbow in our ribs.

Even off the coach-box and rod in hand, there always seems the off chance of an inquest to the novice on those rapid northern streams. There are carrion crows in plenty, with a sprinkling of ravens, ever ready to sit upon the deceased and act as undertakers or sextons. But the probability is that the corbies would be disappointed, and the body would be swirled to the bottom of some

GUDDLING

ugly hole or swept across the sand-bar out to sea. Catastrophes in the excitement of a catch would be more common were not caution generally personified at your elbow in the person of a surefooted and fatherly gillie. Lever's Irish priest told the buxom widow on the canal boat that you must catch your fleas where you can and how you can; so you must cast for your salmon where you are likely to find him. And in his perversity he has probably chosen to lie beneath some slippery pavement of shelving rock, veined with the tripping fir-roots or the tendrils of the ivy. Over footing like that you must follow him when hooked, with your eyes on the water and your thoughts on the line. We remember a man who could not swim once taking an involuntary header in the Carron, and anxious work it was to gaff him and haul him out, although efficient help was at hand. It was there, by the way, we hooked our first salmon, under circumstances that might have tempted a saint to swear. The river had run abnormally low, and the best fishermen had not had a rise for a week. Clumsy casting seemed supererogation, and yet we persevered in careless fashion. We were whipping the Lady's Pool, and jerking the fly heedlessly out of the water. Into one jerk we put so much pith, as the keeper subsequently said, that we pulled a heavy grilse by the head and shoulders clean out of the stream; the casting line snapped and coiled round the top-joint; in fact, that first salmon was so firmly attached that nothing short of surgery could have disengaged him. Tableau: a kilted keeper swearing at large—a neophyte who stood, the image of blank despair, and, what was worse, who carried home a gnawing worm of remorse, only scotched or killed after the coming speat brought water and consolation with other opportunities.

Glenlyon is pleasantly associated with a picturesque variety of sylvan scenery, from the village of Fortingal, with the venerable yew in the kirkyard, to the weather-beaten *Wetter-tannen*, towards the sources of the brawling stream that tumbles down in a succession of cascades above the old grey mansion of Meggernie. For the Lyon rises somewhere on the borders of Perth and Argyle, in the Alpine *cul de sac* of the forest of the Blackmount. The noble lime avenue leading to Meggernie is unrivalled in the North, save at Drummond Castle; there is a gigantic sycamore near the House of Glenlyon, consecrated by immemorial superstition to the cure of all manner of diseases, and the beeches in the Black Wood of Chesthill attain titanic proportions. As you cast in the pools, where the river from below the road

hurries along among rocks and thickets, you catch glimpses of the rugged sides of Ben Lawers, where the small Highland cattle, still further dwarfed by the distance, seem scarcely to find either food or footing. The houses of Glenlyon and Garth have each their memories. The one connects itself with the Massacre of Glencoe, a crime which is said to have brought a blood curse on the family; and the other with the friend of Scott, historian of the Highland clans and their costumes. One is sorry, for the sake of auld lang syne, that the rambling, rickety old inn at Fortingal, with its ill-fitting doors and creaking staircases, should have been replaced by a modern hotel. In the auld house, which used to be a favourite resort of roving artists, we have listened to many a wild Highland tale; for the brands of whisky were undeniable, and the toddy improved towards the small hours.

We confess we do not greatly care for loch fishing. Whether the sport be good, bad, or indifferent, the sitting cramped in a boat is somewhat of a trial to the temper but inadequately compensated when a freshwater shark, in the shape of a *salmo ferox*, runs out a few scores of fathoms of line. The music of the reel is melodious, but the tackle is strong, and the monster, once firmly secured, falls a victim to his own voracity. But the scenery of many of the Scotch lochs is matchless, and the infinite variety lends it endless fascinations. And archipelagoes like that in the Upper Loch Lomond, slumbering half in the shadows of the mighty Ben, may transport you in fancy on a bright summer day to the glowing skies of Greece and the azure isles of the Ægean. The scenery of these Scottish lochs is generally matchless, but Lochleven, the most trouty of them all, is comparatively tame. Lord Cockburn, in his 'Circuit Journeys,' specially denounces that wet, cold, and dull district of Kinross. Somewhat tame Lochleven may be, though the grassy range of Benarty on the south is so steep that a shot rabbit may take a headlong plunge like an ibex and be picked up several hundred feet lower down. But it is rich in the romance of tradition and history. Many a good trout we have caught off the island with the old grey tower, where the lady who had been Queen of France and Scotland was constrained to sign the deed of abdication, and many another in the shallows off the Isle of St. Serf, where that holy recluse who brought Christianity to Scotland had set up his Ebenezer. Now the Loch Leven angling lists are as full of engagements for fishing competitions as the card of a young beauty at her first ball. In the olden time, or some thirty years ago, there were but a couple of boats on the lake, one belonging to the proprietor, the other to the tacks-

man of the fishing. Then the pike were seldom netted, so we suspect the best trout ran heavier than at present. In the laird's boat you had free range, with no fear of finding the good fishing grounds preccupied. Nor was it needful then to make elaborate preliminary arrangements for a descent on Loch Awe—for bespeaking boats and boatmen beforehand, as with the crack guides of Chamounix or Zermatt. There was no sense of being hurried over the evening rubber in the certainty that only too soon the boots would be hammering at your door, or the boatman throwing gravel against the window. There was no necessity to get up with the muirfowl or the lark, lest you should find some other party casting between the grey dawn and the golden sunrise in the quiet bay for which you were heading. But for your own sake you were out in ample time to see the belated mists descending and condensing in the corries. And what a glorious panorama it is, on the long river-like loch winding about among the mountains, from the Campbells' peninsular stronghold of Kilchurn to where the river plunges down the pass of Awe, though the gloomy gorges in the flanks of Ben Cruachan!

But enough of the Scottish lakes and streams, though we might linger on the banks of Allan Water, where it flows to Dunblane through the meadows of Greenloaning, flooded in the winter for the curling contests between North and South; or on the bonny braes of sluggish Doon, whence we might travel upwards to the lakes of Menteith and Lubnaig, to 'lone Loch Ard and Aberfoyle,' and to all the fairy scenery of the 'Lady of the Lake.' We scarcely know whether those places were more enjoyable in solitude conscientiously devoted to sport, or with the merry parties from Stirling garrison, for which fishing or anything else was a fair excuse. Or on the Almond and the rivulets that have their springs in the Pentlands, inviting but sadly delusive; for though the trout were there, they had become preternaturally wary with incessant persecution by the Waltons of the Scottish metropolis. Or on the romantic Stinchar, in the shire of Ayr, fondly remembered by Colquhoun in his 'Moor and Loch,' where the trouting was strictly preserved, and, in favourable circumstances, superexcellent. Nor shall we set foot on the hallowed soil of Tweed and its tributaries; for has it not been trodden and rhapsodised upon, and sung by Christopher North and the Ettrick Shepherd, by Scrope, and Davy, and Stoddart, and a constellation of lesser lights?

Let us change the *venue*, and cross the Border. What can be more exhilarating than a crisp spring day in 'mountainous

Northumberland'? You might do better and have a heavier basket were the air a trifle more balmy, and were there somewhat more cloud; but for the sake of the life dancing in your veins, you are content to put up with the brilliant bursts of sunshine. Of course, there is always that detestable 'haar' or haze dimming the distant horizon, but everywhere, and from each little eminence, away to the east, you admire the massive outlines of King Ida's Castle of Bamborough standing out to seaward. To north-west the Cheviots skirt the view. From Chevy Chase and Otterburne to the Holy Isle of Saint Cuthbert and the Farne Isles of Grace Darling, the whole bare county is a fairyland of romance, legend, and dramatic catastrophe. Mitford, Alnwick, Warkworth, Widdrington, Brinkburn, Ford and Flodden, Chillingham with its wild cattle, and Dunstanburgh with its phantom of Guy the Seeker—each name in the neighbourhood is romantic or historic. It is pleasant to follow the Alne through the park of Alnwick breaking back into something like Highland deer forest, with its venerable monastic remains, though the Alne runs over shallows in a dry season, and the boughs that weep down towards the water are trying alike to the temper and the casting lines. But the Coquet, in point of scenery and associations, is the perfection of North-country fishing. The trout are plentiful, strong and big, although they need a good deal of taking. But the river—without going higher—from Brinkburn Priory down to the Hermitage of Warkworth, and the bridge by the 'Sun' at the bottom of the steep High Street, is one prolonged pastoral idyll. Now sapping the bases of steep, wooded banks, where from the cool shade come the cry of the cuckoo and the cooing of the cushat dove. Then rushing in broad, rippling flood beneath a yellow blaze of broom and honey-scented furze; beneath verdant downs with enamelled borderings of primroses; past whitewashed farm steadings, sheltered by wind-blown ashes and rowan trees, and approached by rows of time-worn stepping-stones, submerged in the floods and in the winter. Solitary enough the landscape seems, but it is far from silent. From every quarter, till the echoes die faintly in the distance, you hear the plaintive bleating of the ewes and their lambs: now and again some frolicsome steer breaks the harmony of the concert with a vociferous bellow, and the plovers, breeding by hundreds in the tufts of rushes, keep him in countenance with their melancholy cries when you tread the swampy places. The air would be sonorous with the trilling of the larks and the hum of the bees if those clamorous lapwings would let you listen to them, and when your senses are not over-

powered by the fragrance of the furze blossoms, they are soothed by the fainter odours of the thyme. In such a scene and on such a day it signifies little whether the trout are rising or not. In fact, you are rather glad of the excuse of mutterings of thunder in the Cheviots, or fleecy linings to leaden clouds, to clasp your hands behind your head and drop off into dreamland, or, if you chance to be more actively inclined, to attend to anything rather than business.

It is a wonderful transition from the swift, swirling Coquet to the tranquil flow of a Southern chalk stream, through a lush growth of meadow-sweet and water forget-me-nots, through rich meadows, pastured by drowsy kine, or in the cool shadow of broad oaks or spreading beeches. There the coarser art of the Northern angler is baffled by the careful stalking and the fine fishing at which at first he is inclined to sneer. There is many a knowing wrinkle, there is a fastidious delicacy of throwing the flies, as to which his education has been somewhat neglected. At a Tully Veolan, as the Baron would have said, he may be a deacon of the craft, but he is sadly to seek in the still, limpid water, with gossamer gut and midge-like lures. He is not up to the dodge of the dexterous *ricochet* from the old willow stump, so that the delusive may-fly will drop in a tiny ripple right over the jaws of the lurking two-pounder. He has not been in the habit of preliminary surveys, so as to identify particular fish, and insidiously worm himself into acquaintance with their haunts, idiosyncrasies, and peculiarities. Moreover, from the gourmet's point of view, with their almost invariable sub-flavour of mud and slime—the trout of the Test are exceptions—he seldom considers them worth the taking. That is of course a detail, and he is far from being insensible to the triumph when he succeeds in landing a local notoriety. Indeed, there are trout which are the respected patrons of famous fishing hostelries, and whose capture, like a destructive fire or the starting of an opposition establishment, would be nothing short of a calamity. Like John Burley's one-eyed pike in 'My Novel,' these trout balance themselves, contemptuous of strategy, in the pool beneath the bridge, gorge themselves on the drifting beetles and struggling flies, and frustrate all devices of the enemy. One of them used to be kept on the staff of that comfortable inn, the 'Lion,' at Farningham, on the Darenth; and he so thoroughly understood his serious responsibilities, that after attracting shoals of skilled fishermen from town, we believe he died of accident or age.

As for the streams on the Continent, although they call back

many a delightful day, we have found them for the most part inviting, but deceptive. They are generally netted and poached in unscrupulous fashion, till the fish will take fright at the faintest shadow, and flee like the wicked when no man pursueth. The angler should be an artist and have his sketch-book to fall back upon. Besides, the weather is invariably against you. The shrunken water runs limpid under cloudless skies; or the air is languid and sultry, with distant mutterings of storm-weather; or the warmth has been melting the mountain snows, and the milky flood has its rise in some natural refrigerator. We doubt not there was a time when, as Weld and other Waltonians assure us, heavy baskets were to be filled in Brittany. Anything prettier, in every sense, than the waters near Lannion, Morlaix, Quimper, and scores of similarly picturesque localities, it would be hard to imagine. The gentle fall of the swelling ground gives a succession of pools and rippling rushes. There are broomy and heathery knowes as on the braes of Northumberland, and deep leads from lichen-draped mill-wheels, overhung by willows and alders. But cast perseveringly as you will, a few small and coarse nondescripts are likely to be the sole reward, and, finally, perhaps you fall back as fruitlessly upon bait. Spa, in the vaunted Ardennes, is as good a headquarters for disappointment as we know. Take a ticket by rail to Remiremont, and you are so charmed by the look of the river that you have scarcely patience to rig up the rod. Then comes such a lesson in the vanity of mortal hopes as would have put Solomon through another course of experiences. We have done much better in the Ahr Valley, with Remagen as a starting point. There the lively trout seemed to crave excitement, and were often ready to take upon any terms. And what a romantic valley it is, with the 'banks that bear the corn and wine,' and the terraced vineyards of the rich red grape, duly chalked and numbered! Passing somewhat parched and slightly wearied under the old arch at the well-named Altenahr, the luncheon in the old-fashioned inn was a thing to remember. With half a dozen of your troutlets frizzled with parsley or fennel, and veal cutlets and potato salad to follow, washed down with beakers of Ahrbleichart—or Walpertzheimer for choice.

We can honestly say little in praise of Switzerland, and we have tested it, off and on, from Bienne to Schaffhausen and from Basle to Vevay. But that is merely a confession of personal failure, for we are bound to believe experienced residents, who always told very different tales. One of them used to take us out trolling on Lake Leman; but somehow we always came home

empty-handed. Fruitlessly, though under equally artistic direction, have we tried the rushes below Schaffhausen. We never enjoyed the sport, at which Alexandre Dumas assisted, of wading at night in icy water with a lantern and a sickle—and *pour cause.* On the whole, our happiest hours were spent in the rather cruel and childish amusement of bobbing with a kill-devil from Ouchy pier, the kill-devil being a conglomeration of leaded hooks, which were sunk and jerked up among the shoals of minnows.

But if we found Switzerland a failure, it was very different with the Salzkammergut. Go whither one would, you could

WADING IN ICY WATER WITH A LANTERN AND A SICKLE

hardly go wrong, for a generation ago very little of the water was scrupulously preserved. A courteous request for leave seldom met a refusal. And there could be no more glorious headquarters than the 'Kaiserinn Elizabeth' at Ischl—at Ischl in the blush of spring and before the setting in of the fashionable season. The cuisine was undeniable, and the wines were sound and cheap; the amber ale as good as in Vienna, and no man can say fairer than that. The bow-window of the *speisesaal* looked out on the Traun—commemorated by 'Piscator' or Sir Humphry Davy—of which the

landlord rented some half a dozen miles. The scenery and surroundings are unrivalled of their sort: behind the flowery meadows the black pines stand fast rooted by their clutching stems in the many-coloured rocks, and the air is scented with the stacks of meadow hay and the walnut trees and Spanish chestnuts. Nowhere, to our knowledge, are the trout so strong. When a couple came on the line at once, which not infrequently happened, you might have fancied you were grappling with an eight-pound grilse. The grayling, too, showed desperate fight for a full half-minute, though the fight soon died out, like fire set to a cobweb. But Ischl is *par excellence* the best of all quarters for enchanting angling excursions of any length.

Nor can you go far wrong in the way of walks in the Black Forest. The Murg is good, and the Murgthal had the advantage of being within easy reach of Baden, where the most fastidious of anglers had a tolerable choice of quarters. If he passed over the hills into Wurtemburg, and descended on Wildbad, he found a river much resembling the Traun, but ruined for his purposes by the descents of the wood rafts, which scared the trout out of their senses. But of all delightful deceptions commend us to the French Gaves of the Western Pyrenees. That there are trout of the best no one can doubt who has lunched or dined from the reservoirs of Eaux Chaudes. But of the disappointments the Gave d'Oléron has in store we can speak with confidence. We have fished it repeatedly with two keen and practised hands—with George Hughes, the younger brother of 'Tom Brown,' and Ferdinand St. John, famous for his talk and his stories, who could converse fluently in every Christian European tongue, who might have done what he pleased with his brilliant talents, and who proved his coolness and courage in the memorable Neapolitan duel with the Count d'Arragon, in which the provoked was constrained to become the provoker. In the Gave, which looked as if the landing-net should have been in constant requisition, we seldom had a catch and not often a rise. To be sure, the evenings passed in that company were even more enjoyable than the fruitless days. In France there was no lack of creature comforts. It was altogether a different thing on the Spanish side. There you kennelled in lofts where you looked down through rifts in the log floor on the kitchen, and where you were smoked like the hams which should have been hanging to the rafters, and worried by mosquitos and worse. There you supped on watery soup *à l'huile*, and on *puchero* reeking of garlic, where the shreds of pork were missing, and on the black brickbats given you for bread, and indigestible as

the goat's-milk cheese. The black wine, mis-christened Val de Peñas, had a rich flavour of the pig-skin. The rivers, though perhaps more broken, were the twin brothers of the French Gaves; but the fishing was capital, and after the bracing of the morning dip it almost recompensed one for the rough commons. You were in a nook of old Spain, as Ford has described it, where the invigorating mountain air made mere existence delightful; but then you ought to have been *hecho de bronze*—cast in bronze—by a severe preliminary course of training, and should have paid heed to Ford's prudent advice and looked very carefully to the provant in the saddle-bags.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

Soon after writing my Notes last month about the three-year-olds I had an opportunity of seeing Velasquez at work on the Bury hill, and of discussing the colt with his trainer. Walters reports that all his horses have wintered in the most satisfactory manner, and that none has done better than the Derby favourite. Velasquez has been spoken of as a little horse, but in fact he is the least shade under 15.3, which is just about the ideal height. Possibly he might be a trifle longer with advantage, but is not that precisely what a critic of make and shape would have said of St. Simon, unless, indeed, the critic had been more pronounced, and had stigmatised that great horse as distinctly short? But St. Simon was amply long enough for all practical purposes, as he unfailingly afforded proof. When the horse cantered past me, soon after my chat with Walters, a very experienced old trainer was by my side. 'Will he win the Derby?' I suggested. 'If he stays, very likely he will,' was the reply; 'but I am rather doubtful whether he does.' The grounds for this doubt, I made out on further inquiry, were indefinite: it was an impression, but the impression of a singularly shrewd observer, who had been devoting his mind to the subject for a great many years. Possibly he had been struck by something in the colt's action which I confess I have

never noted. Except the Middle Park Plate, for which the heavy condition of the going affords an excuse not to be disregarded even by those who are incredulous of excuses as a rule, no horse could have won his races in more brilliant style, and that is a very strong argument in his favour.

The supporters of Galtee More are encouraged by the belief that, well as he ran in the summer and early autumn, he was not really at his best until his last appearance, and they think he beat Velasquez on his merits. If this be so it greatly alters the case, for my hesitation to accept him as a very dangerous rival of Lord Rosebery's colt was based on the undoubted fact that some of Galtee More's running was decidedly moderate. If on these occasions he were some pounds behind his true form the matter appears in a different light. At the time of writing he is doing very little work, and has indeed on some mornings been only trotting. This may portend something serious the matter or may be nothing at all. One of the disadvantages of having to write my Notes so long before their publication is that many things happen while the magazine is being printed and bound, and when I cannot alter opinions which events have greatly varied. Thus, last month, I wrote in favour of Stratocracy. I did so because Lord Cadogan had stated to a friend his conviction that the horse had an even-money chance for the Grand National; but almost before my Note had gone to press Stratocracy began to develop troublesome splints, and his friends necessarily lost faith. By the time these pages appear the great 'chase will have been run, and readers will know what has happened. As for Galtee More, a notion certainly prevails at Newmarket that, fit and well at the post on the Derby day, he has a very great chance; and if we really did not see the best of him till his race with Velasquez, it may be so. For a vague rumour that he 'makes a noise' I can find no foundation.

Supposing that Velasquez does not stay, and that Galtee More goes in any way wrong, the chances of Vesuvian would of course be generally esteemed brilliant; indeed, he has warm supporters in the face of all possible rivals. Some at least of the connections of the Kingsclere stable are not, however, by any means enthusiastic about the son of Royal Hampton and Fuse.

One of them went so far as to give me his opinion that Vesuvian was a moderate horse, and to declare that his leg was crookeder than ever. Victory in the greatest of races has seemed to rest between the three that have been named, but is there any hope for an outsider after all? Mr. Mainwaring, the handicapper, it will be seen on another page, speaks of Silver Fox as having an outside chance, but surely it must be exceedingly remote. Many of those who saw the Gimcrack Stakes are convinced that Monterey, had he not been shut in, would have beaten Silver Fox without difficulty, though, on the other hand, the latter colt's owner thinks that with luck in the race he would have won more easily. I was not present, and do not know the grounds for this belief. Even if Monterey were found to stay, I cannot regard his success as at all possible; at all distances I fancy Velasquez would have no difficulty in beating him, as he did twice so easily last year, though the son of Goldfinch and Mutina made a better fight with Galtee More in the Rous Plate at Doncaster. The latter, however, wore him down and beat him two lengths in a manner which suggested that Galtee More stays and that Monterey does not. I do not see, in fact, where the outsider is to come from.

Sir Ralph Payne-Gallwey writes to me as follows with reference to the subject of Birmingham guns, on which I commented last month:—'Ever since I wrote an article for your magazine on Messrs. Holland's shooting-school, I have been "fired at" by the Birmingham gunmakers individually and collectively. This article was not written in the interests of any particular firm of gunmakers. It was written for the benefit of sportsmen generally, and described a modern shooting-school, of which there are several near London. I could not describe them all, so visited and wrote of the one I had heard was a good example of its kind. Messrs. Holland did not see one line of the article before it was published, and knew nothing whatever of its contents other than the sketches for it they sent me at my request. The Birmingham trade has accused me of writing in your magazine that, "*as a rule*, the Birmingham gun was a *monstrum horrendum* reach-me-down weapon, fit for neither man, nor bird, nor beast." What I did write—and it puts a vastly different complexion on the sentence—was "that *monstrum horrendum* a ready-made reach-me-down Birmingham gun, was fit for,' &c., &c. This sentence distinctly applied to a certain class of weapon—a cheap and

nasty class—whether made in London or the provinces, but, it cannot be denied, more associated with Birmingham than London. I should have thought that anyone reading this extract fairly would have so understood it, the terms "ready-made, reach-me-down" so very clearly defining the inferior kind of gun I referred to. I certainly had no intention of casting any reflection upon the leading gunmakers of Birmingham or their work. No one doubts that well-made guns are manufactured in Birmingham, or that there are highly and deservedly respected firms of gun-makers in that city. I should have imagined the latter gentlemen would have been among the first to agree with my criticism of the poor class of gun I so pointedly alluded to.'

It will have been seen from my Note of last month that the above was the interpretation I placed on Sir Ralph Payne-Gallwey's article, and I assuredly had no intention, when I accepted the paper, of ruffling the susceptibilities of the Birmingham gun-makers, several of whom have written to me in varying terms of expostulation. One of them, Mr. G. E. Lewis, assures me that he gets what he terms 'Purdey's prices' for his best guns from well-known sportsmen, who certainly understand what guns are, and would not pay such prices if they did not obtain good value; and Mr. Lewis adds that other Birmingham houses, to his knowledge, are paid at similar rates. I much regret that the makers should have found cause to consider themselves aggrieved, and to have discussed the article angrily, as I am told they did; and I can only repeat the hope that Sir Ralph Payne-Gallwey's explanation will allay the feeling of irritation which has arisen.

My notes on roulette last month have drawn me a multitude of letters from writers who have studied the subject more or less deeply—less deeply, as a rule, and, I am inclined to think, not at the Monte Carlo tables, where the folly of systems and schemes and methods is so very forcibly impressed on the player. Some of my correspondents ask for information as to the best plan to adopt; a few recommend plans of their own. There is, however, only one thing absolutely certain at roulette, and that is that if one plays long enough, beyond the extreme probability that one will lose heavily in proportion to one's stake, there is the practical certainty that the table will win that percentage of the

money risked which the genius who invented the game so carefully allotted. The more one plays, the more one sees the absolute folly of calculations. Three of my correspondents declare their intention of playing on the principle of which I gave them a detailed example; and one writer expresses an opinion that it is 'sound.' I have already assured him that it is not so, nor did I ever pretend that it was; on the contrary, I expressly stated that the result of applying it on one special occasion, when my friend and I wondered what would have happened had we played it, would have been a loss of ninety-five louis. Judgment is useless, luck is everything. One of my correspondents wants to know why anybody wastes time at roulette when his chances at trente-et-quarante are so very much better. 'My method is to play for runs of three or four, either leaving all down, or withdrawing the original stake when the thing you want has turned up twice or three times.' I used to think the same. It took more than one visit to Monte Carlo, indeed, to convince me to the contrary; but I have paid handsomely for the knowledge that this is very far indeed from being anything like a safe game.

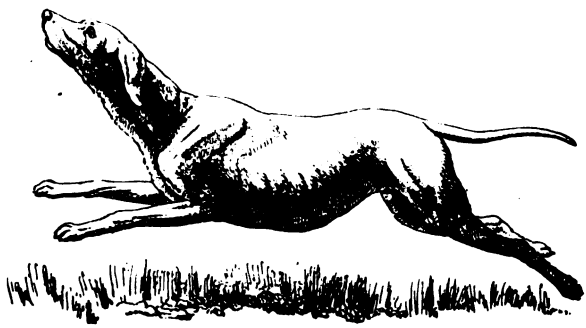
It is remarkable how luck changes on the Turf. I came the other day on a Note I wrote nearly ten years since on the lack of good fortune that pursued the Prince of Wales. His Royal Highness had a speedy filly named Counterpane that fell dead on the course at Stockbridge when running for the Cup, which she would apparently have won. He had another promising filly named Lady Peggy, who, however, came so short in performance that a poor little 100*l.* plate was all she ever secured. He bought a mare called Coquette, supposed to be something out of the common, who broke down hopelessly; and after Hohenlinden had won the Grand Military Gold Cup in 1887, the horse was disqualified on a purely technical objection—he was described as six years old instead of aged, or *vice versâ*, I forget which—but the point is that six-year-old and aged horses all carried the same weight. In time, however, a Florizel II. appears, with a Persimmon and a Thais to follow.

The Grand Military at Sandown is always a success, though we could all wish that the soldiers owned a few better horses, or

at any rate produced them for the Gold Cup, the Handicap, and United Service 'chases. Field Marshal and Midshipmite have had their day, and Parapluie, who won, is much behind the form of the animal to whom a race of this sort ought to fall. Mr. Reginald Ward would have improved the state of affairs had he brought out Cathal. As regards riding, of course Captain Bewicke is missed, for I regard him as the best cross-country horseman of the day, amateur or professional; and one does not forget poor Roddy Owen. Mr. Atkinson, too, is a loss to the Service as an available horseman. But Mr. Reginald Ward has come on extraordinarily of late. Mr. Arthur Coventry always assured me that Mr. Ward would train on into the first class, when, I confess, I scarcely thought so; but he was right, and the owner of Cathal has beautiful hands, sound judgment, and abundance of dash tempered by patience and discretion. Mr. A. Lawson is also a really excellent horseman. I like the liberty and long rein he gives his horses at their fences, for he is, at the same time, always ready to hold them together when they want it. Captain Ricardo is another rider who has improved greatly and shows skill and head; Captain Eustace Crawley, Sir Cuthbert Slade, Mr. Murray-Threipland, and a few other familiar faces are still happily to the fore, and Mr. Campbell, with a Grand National to his credit, is of course a prominent figure.

At the time of writing the judges have not given their decision in the case of the Anti-Gambling League *v.* Dunn; but secrets are apt to leak out, and I hear on authority which I fear is much too good to be doubted that the plaintiffs will succeed. The rumour at first went that the judges were unable to agree, but now, I believe, they have made up their minds, in face of the preamble to Lord Cockburn's Act. I am unaffectedly sorry, because betting will not be in any way diminished, and the evils which attend it will be enormously increased by driving it into holes and corners. The question will be which of the innumerable ways of evading the law will be found most convenient to the vast army of those who will at once set themselves deliberately to break it; and it is a bad thing that a multitude of those who have prided themselves on being law-abiding men should be anxious to commit offences. I never recommend anybody to bet, because many years' intimate experience of backing horses has convinced me that all the chances are enormously in favour of the professional bookmaker. I am almost inclined to say that

those who know most, who have the best sources of information open to them, win least; but I hate this interference with one's freedom of action. At first the consequences will be specially mischievous. The value of blood stock will be reduced, and, of course, holders of shares in racing companies will suffer. By degrees, however, the most convenient methods of breaking the law with impunity will be discovered, and the business will continue much as before, except that the bodies which now see that wagering is honestly conducted may be disestablished. I am told that a well-known racing peer has already prepared a Bill to put the matter on a sound footing. This may or may not pass; its passage would simplify matters, but I am assuming that it is rejected. The stupidity of the Anti-Gambling League is shown by their Bill to 'prevent' the sending of telegrams about racing. What could be simpler than a code? You wire, 'Meet me at Colchester 3.30,' and it means 'Put me a hundred on Steamer,' or something of that sort. Very many owners use codes now. If the Anti-Gambling League imagine that they have done anything at all towards the suppression of betting, they are hopelessly wrong.



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AN OVER-REACH

BY ALFRED E. T. WATSON

CHAPTER I

'THE favourite wins!' 'He's won now!' 'Come on, Hamlet!' 'Hamlet's won!' 'I knew it was a certainty; why didn't I have a real dash?' Such and similar were the cries which accompanied the finish of a National Hunt flat race at Sanfield Park; and there seemed reason in the current opinion. Hamlet, a good-looking four-year-old, lately bought in Ireland, had started a hot favourite, partly because his form in a preceding race justified the laying of 2 to 1, and partly because he was ridden by the well-known Jack Tomkins, nominally a gentleman-rider, and well described by the latter half of the compound word, infinitesimal as was his claim to the former. There had been five starters; three wretches were tailed off; Beanfeast was leading two or three lengths at the distance, but on her back was that enthusiastic young amateur, Harry Montague, whose proceedings in the saddle were invariably erratic in the extreme.

Montague stuck to riding with indomitable resolution, in spite of the chaff with which his efforts were received by his friends—chaff which was always good-natured, however, for Harry was the best of good fellows, cheery, kind-hearted, and without an atom of conceit. For two years he had ridden his own horses

without ever winning a race; but he lived in hope, and hope—so often disappointed—was doubtless reviving in him now.

Why does the raw amateur find it so apparently impossible to sit still? Old Beanfeast was going strong; all that was wanted was for Harry to keep him at it with his hands; but he looked back at Hamlet, did not like what he saw, and up went that fatal whip, by the injudicious use of which so many races are thrown away.

'I knew it!' exclaimed Willie Skene, looking on from the Club enclosure. 'He might have just got home if he'd left the old horse alone, and now he's done it again!'

'Poor old boy, I wish he'd given himself a chance. He is so keen, I should love to see him win a race,' Charlie Addington replied. 'What a pretty horseman that brute Tomkins is!'

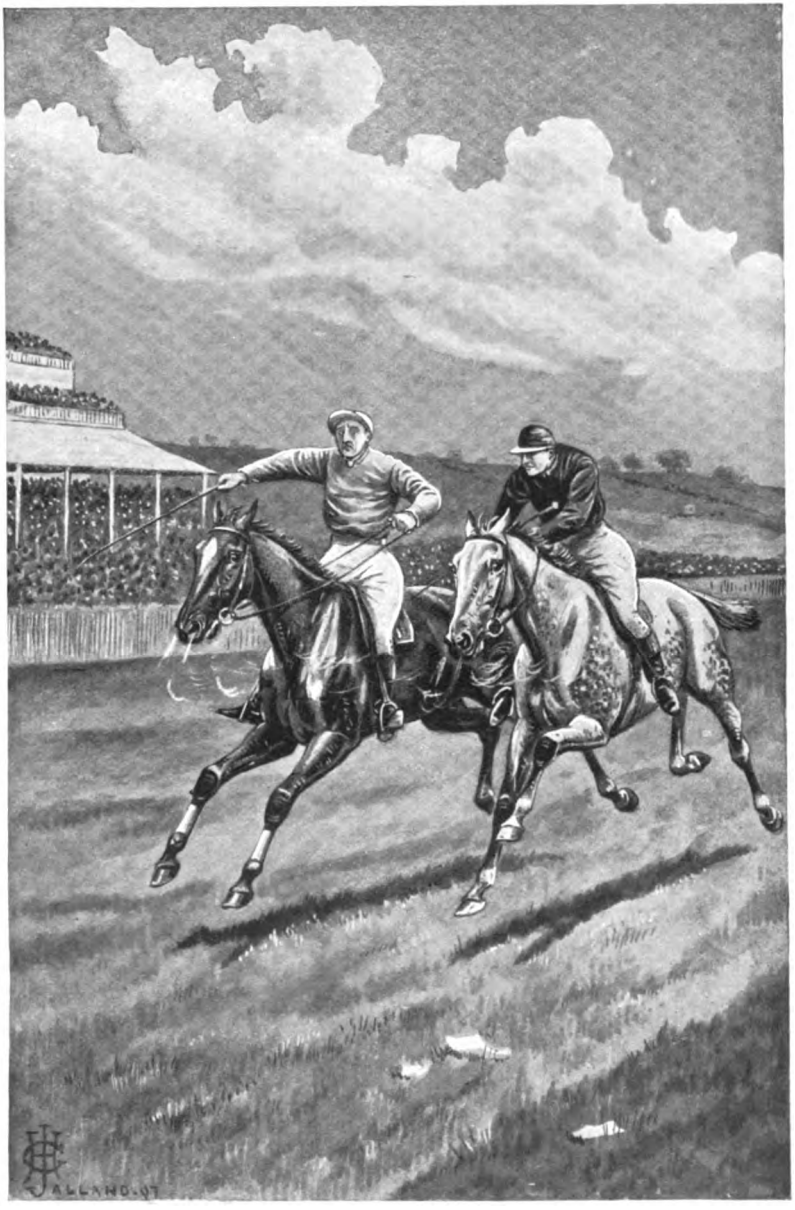
The comment was justified. Over a country or on the flat there was scarcely a better rider in the ranks of professionals; and the contrast between him and Montague, who was now all over his horse, could not well have been more striking. 'Hit him, sir, hit him! No, by Jove, he's missed him!' was the advice and observation of an onlooker, when just such another rider as Harry Montague was trying to finish one day; but Harry did get one or two in; Beanfeast—with his head loose, of course—swerved and scrambled, while Hamlet was gradually but surely catching him. All the same, they were now very near the post, and the second had a full length to make up. An accidental prick from the spur on the near shoulder rather straightened the leader, and rapidly as Hamlet was overhauling him, it looked almost a dead heat—no one could be quite sure which had won—as they passed the post.

'I say! He ran that fine! I suppose he *did* get up?' Skene remarked.

'Of course he did; Tomkins doesn't make mistakes. But it was a very short head, all the same! What's Hamlet's number? 2?—there it goes. No, by Jove! Look! 5! Harry's won. What a joke!'

'Well, he certainly didn't deserve to win, but there it is. Let's go and see him,' Skene continued, and they hurried from their places to go round and meet the triumphant jockey on his return to the scale.

Harry was blowing like a grampus, more from excitement than want of condition, as he sat in the saddle by the weighing-room door, realising the delightful fact that he had won a race at last—actually, and no mistake about it, won—and that, too, after



It looked almost a Dead Heat

a desperate fight with probably the most accomplished—if least respectable—of all possible adversaries. When he slid from his horse his fingers trembled so much that he could hardly unbuckle the girths.

'Well, old chap, you rode like a demon—a somewhat wild and injudicious demon, perhaps—but you got there all the same, and that's the great thing, after all!' Addington said to him, patting him on the shoulder.

'Yes, at last, old boy, but I thought he'd done me,' Harry answered jubilantly. 'Of course I know you're going to say I started riding too soon, but you don't know how awful it is to have that fellow stealing up behind you, and how it makes you want to get home!'

'You'll buy the old horse in, I suppose?' Skene said, in a low tone, as he walked into the weighing-room with the saddle-laden victor.

'Buy him in? I should think so, after winning on him! Would you mind bidding for me?'

'What will you give? Let's see, he cost you 240, didn't he?'

'Yes; but I wouldn't let him go for twice that, though I'm not flush just now, and I had only a tenner on. He must have come on, you know, a lot. A head better than Hamlet! and, of course, I know that Tomkins can give me a lot of weight, though I did beat him, didn't I? and after a deuce of a set-to in the bargain!' he grimaced with delight. 'I suppose he left it too long, thought he'd catch me easier than he did. I don't think I'm quite as bad as I was, you know, old chap? You must learn a lot in the course of time, and I've ridden close on thirty races without winning!'

'Oh, yes, you're coming on—by degrees. But am I to go to a monkey?' Addington asked, and the beaming jockey, as he prepared to enter the scales, begged him to do so, and a little over if necessary.

'Tomkins took things too easy for once; those clever fellows are too clever at times,' young Crichton observed to his friend Cecil, one of the stewards of the meeting, as they strolled towards the paddock; and Cecil, with some hesitation, replied musingly, 'Yes, I suppose so.'

Also approaching the ring now being formed round the auctioneer were Tomkins, the unsuccessful jockey, and Payne, the owner of Hamlet. Their faces were alike imperturbable, and their voices low, but there was an accent of satisfaction in Payne's subdued tones.

'You never rode a better race than that, Jack, in all your life,' he muttered. 'Couldn't have been more neatly done!'

'I don't know; I wasn't happy till the number went up, I can tell you. I thought the silly young fool must have gone a bit faster at the end, and I almost came too soon. I calculated on letting him win a good neck. Did anyone say anything?' Tomkins inquired.

'No, not anyone to take notice of. Larkin said, "I suppose that just suited you!" but I didn't answer. Craik and his friend were doing the job for us, and I suppose we shall get a fairish bit more for second. Young Montague won't let it go, I expect; we shall be safe bidding up to near on a monkey!'

'What may I say for the winner, gentlemen?' the auctioneer began. 'He won handsomely, gentlemen, beating a good horse, &c. &c.' Ultimately Beanfeast was bought in for 480 guineas, leaving 200*l.* surplus for Messrs. Payne and Tomkins, in addition to some 600*l.* they had made by laying against their own horse; for, as the reader will have gathered from the scraps of conversation that have been recorded, these two astute personages had perceived that money could be made with greater certainty by losing than by winning the race. Bad as the other three starters had been, the two could not trust so very poor a horseman as Montague to win outright; they hoped he would do so, but it was not good enough for them to bet on; still, whatever beat Hamlet was sure to realise something that would leave a decent surplus for the second. Craik, a bookmaker of their own kidney, had undertaken to get what he could out of their horse, and besides the money that they thus won, if the roguery could be carried out without awakening suspicion, a very incorrect idea of Hamlet's real capacity would remain to be turned to account on some future occasion. Lord Cecil's hesitation in agreeing that Tomkins had made a mistake arose from a dim perception of what had really taken place; but Tomkins had ridden his nefarious race with a skill which went far to quell suspicion, and Cecil could do no more than make a mental note.

Poor Harry would have been less happy if he had only known the true state of the case. He hoped everyone he knew would come and talk to him about the race, and then there was the special *Standard* to be read, and all the sporting papers next day, and the weeklies after that! Men would come up to him in his club and say, 'You won a race at Sanfield, I see?' There it was on the boards of all the clubs at the present moment! Fellows would read it, and say to each other, 'Hamlet was beaten, I see;

Montague won on his own horse!' His trainer, too, must think better of him, and the circumstance that he could not have thought much hitherto had been a standing source of regret to Harry. Winning meant such a lot! He had a place at last in the list of successful riders, and he really did not like to take off the blue and white striped jacket that had been first past the post.

A battered old hanger-on to racecourses, Jerry Smithers, had for a long time past attached himself to Harry's service, carried his bag to and from the station, and made himself as useful as he knew how, and Harry by no means despised the old man's congratulations.

'Done it at last, sir, and I'm real glad! I knowed you would some day if you stuck to it, and you rode a good race home, too, sir. A bit too flurried, if you'll excuse me, sir, when you see him coming to you; but he's a desperate fellow to be alongside of, is Tomkins, sir.'

'Thank you, Jerry; I'm afraid you didn't back me?' Harry replied, half trying to persuade himself that it was in the least likely the old man might have done so.

'No, sir. I didn't have no bet. Things is very bad, sir, and my rheumatics do trouble me so I can't get about as I should like. Missed two weeks, sir; had to stay abed, and then there's nothing to be picked up.'

'No nearer to the bird-shop, Jerry?' Montague asked, as at length he drew off his colours. 'You haven't taken that yet?'

'No, sir,' Jerry answered with a sigh; 'the old woman is always talking of it; but we don't get no nearer. Ah, sir, if I could once get a start, me as knows what birds is! To see them and have 'em chirruping and chirping, and the singing ones going of it! To sit in the warm—it's been my dream of happiness, but I have no luck!'

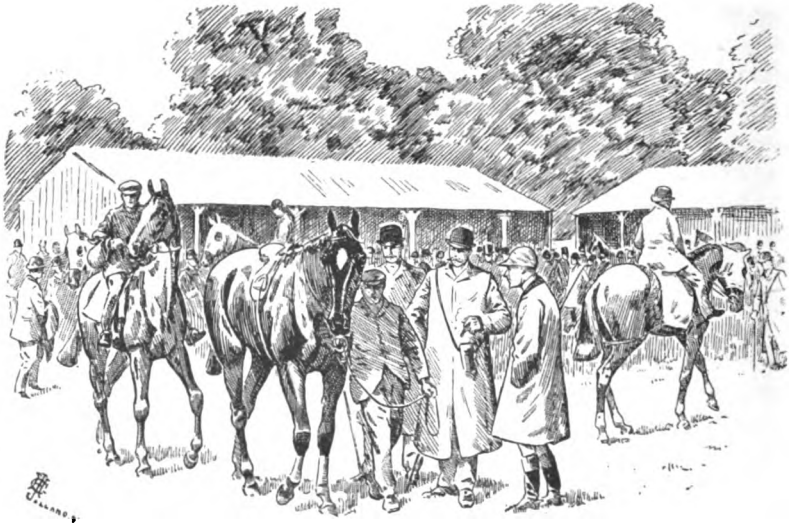
'You back winners sometimes, don't you, Jerry?'

'Yes, sir, for half-a-crown or five shillings, and make a bit and lose it. I can't win at the game, sir; I hears too much for one thing, and studies the form too much for another—the two don't agree. Thank you kindly, sir, and I hope you'll keep on now that you've begun.'

Harry was too anxious to get out and talk about the race to linger in the room now that he was dressed, and if some of his friends were inclined to chaff him about his finish—the only spur mark on old Beanfeast had been on his shoulder—it is a very soothing reply to an argument that whatever happened in the race your number went up when it was over.

CHAPTER II

'HE looks well, doesn't he?' Harry Montague, dressed ready to ride, suggested to Skene and Addington some ten days later. They had met in the paddock at the Gatton meeting, and watched old Beanfeast being led round and round. In truth the old horse had looked much about the same for the last three years—rather round in the joints, a bit curious about the hocks, and devoid of any points on which the eye of the impartial critic could dwell with pleasure; but the owner of a steed that has carried him to victory after a long succession of failures to get first past the post is not quite an unprejudiced judge. Harry had been very happy



'HE LOOKS WELL, DOESN'T HE?'

since Sanfield Meeting, although he had derived a somewhat mitigated satisfaction from the papers. Most of them had seemed to him culpably deficient in comment. Their announcements, as a rule, had been far too bare. They had merely, for the most part, said that the race was won by Beanfeast, ridden by his owner; one had indeed declared that 'after a most energetic attempt to throw the race away, Mr. Montague had gained an entirely unmerited victory,' and another had referred to the owner's 'admirably successful imitation of a windmill in a gale;' but a more amiable writer had said that it was pleasant to see perseverance rewarded; a few others had made comparatively

civil remarks, and the result of the whole was to make him doubly anxious to win again.

'There go the numbers, six runners, and very very bad indeed, bar Hamlet. Now, do just tell me what you really think, Willie,' Montague said. 'Have I a chance?'

'Well, my boy, you must have, of course, on form, and if you won't mind my saying so, I'm sure you'd have won easier, much easier, last time if you'd sat still; so you've got a bit in hand that way if you have a little more patience,' Skene replied.

'I think the old horse is better, too. He was short of a gallop before—they are rather afraid of that leg, you know, so that's another trifle the right way, and every little helps. Look at poor old Jerry, he's dreadfully lame to-day. Thank you, Jerry,' he continued, when the old man had come up and expressed his good wishes. 'You're on three sovereigns towards the bird-shop if we win.'

Montague was, in fact, rather hopeful than sanguine; but quite a different tone prevailed in a little group of three—Payne, Tomkins, and Craik's friend and partner—who were discussing the situation together, awaiting the instruction to 'Mount, gentlemen, please.' Craik had sent word that every arrangement had been made for the starting price dash on Hamlet.

'It's simply the best thing I ever knew racing,' Tomkins replied to the inquiry of the friend as to whether there was no way in which it *could* 'come undone.' 'Why, 21 lb. wouldn't bring them together if Montague could ride. You'll see what will happen. They say I left it too long last time; well, I sha'n't leave it too long this!'

'We shall have to let the horse go,' Payne broke in. 'I'm told that that there Lord Cecil thinks something about the last time he was out, so Jack will come along this time; and there's the excuse, if they say anything, that he didn't make enough use of him before. See?'

'It'll never be in doubt, my boy, and I can tell you I want it. Things have been going very queer of late,' Tomkins rejoined.

It is curious that the rogue so seldom thrives in the long run. This may be said without depreciating the astuteness of the few 'professional backers' who furnish exceptions to the rule, though we have the satisfaction of seeing some of the most rascally of these hard hit and indeed knocked out, at times. Payne and Tomkins had recently found people who played their own game better than they, and had suffered in consequence—and they would indeed have been in a bad way, to the great advantage of

the Turf, had they not known that Hamlet was a little gold mine. Of the six starters, Beanfeast was a long way second best, even allowing for lack of jockeyship on the part of his owner; two of the other riders, indeed, were quite as bad as he, and their horses were worse than Harry's, who did go a bit when he had been kept sound enough to do a little work—in fact, the confidence in Hamlet was entirely justified; and as he cantered to the post there was a business-like look about him and his jockey which showed why the ring were offering to take odds and were laying 2 to 1 and 5 to 2 against Beanfeast, in spite of form that was not ten days old.

The field were at the post, the flag was up, and down it fell; the six started in a line that was speedily broken by the appearance, in front, of the red jacket carried by Hamlet.

'Tomkins is bringing them along!' Addington observed to Skene. 'What's his game? To take the steel out of his horse and let Harry catch him, do you think? They are coming a rare bat!'

'I'm afraid the steel will be out of Beanfeast first. I don't think the old beggar will like being hustled like that. Look, the last two are dead beat already,' Skene rejoined.

More than half the journey was covered, and the four-year-old was ten lengths ahead; Beanfeast second, two or three lengths in front of the next couple, that were side by side; the last pair dropping further and further into the rear.

'He's not slowing down,' Addington said. 'Poor old Harry; how he must be longing to get up his flail! But he vowed he wouldn't touch his horse till the last dozen strides, whatever happened.'

'Oh, Hamlet's won in a walk,' Skene answered. 'There goes Harry. I knew he couldn't stand it any longer; but it's no good, old boy, you're done!'

Harry had broken his resolution long before the distance was reached; but there was some sort of excuse for him all the same, for, doing his best without coercion, the gap between himself and the leader was increasing. He might have saved himself the trouble, nevertheless. Beanfeast could not mend his pace. Hamlet was still going at his ease, and, recognising the hopelessness of the case, Harry wisely ceased to persevere, leaving Hamlet to win in a canter by twenty lengths.

It was a sore disappointment to the beaten jockey. A lingering notion that possibly he had not won the previous race on his merits had vexed him, and he was doubly anxious to prove—to

THE FLAG WAS UP, AND DOWN IT FELL

be able to feel—that there had been no mistake. That victory had been so pleasant! and what could such a hollow beating this time mean? The old horse was well, he knew; he had done nothing stupid, had not hurried off in pursuit of the leader till Beanfeast was well on his legs, but nevertheless had lost no time by reason of any vain hope that Tomkins did not know how fast he was going, and would come back to him. He was fully conscious of Tomkins' excellent judgment, and after the first quarter of a mile or so had steadily endeavoured to do a little more than keep his place—gradually to get just somewhat nearer to the red jacket that was dashing along in front. No one, indeed, could have ridden better. The truth was that Tomkins was perfectly correct as to the relative form of the two horses. He had said that he had a good 21 lb. in hand, and that was just about the state of the case.

Skene and Addington received him at the weighing-room door with a sobriety of demeanour unlike the jubilation of the Sanfield success.

'Odd change of form!' Addington remarked. 'It wasn't your fault, old boy. You couldn't have done more!'

Harry dismounted, and began to undo his girth. 'It's good of you to say so, old chap; but I don't know. I ought to have been nearer at least, I expect,' he replied; and just then old Jerry, hobbling and panting, forced his way through the crowd. With much eagerness and a hurried 'Beg pardon, sir,' he touched his patron on the arm.

'Well, Jerry, I'm sorry you did not win your little bet,' Harry said, with a rather sickly smile—to have been beaten in such hollow fashion was a blow.

But Jerry had something to say, and as he said it, walking by Harry's side, as he went towards the weighing-room, a strange look of incredulity and surprise on Harry's face gradually changed to a smile of satisfaction.

Satisfaction was also predominant in another little group close at hand. Tomkins' countenance was not an expressive one, but a grin spread over his features as he listened to the account Craik's friend had to give of these proceedings. There was nearly 3,000*l.* for Payne and his gentleman-rider to divide, the biggest haul they had ever made.

'That silly young bleater, Montague, thought he was sure to win—he did, I tell you! "Going to do me again?" I says, as we went to the post. "I'm going to try," says he. "Well, don't you try too hard," I says, "because you might hurt yourself,"'

and he looked at his friends for applause at so shrewd a witticism. 'Tom Tubb did laugh,' he continued; '"Shall I put him over the rails for you?" he says, quiet, when Montague had gone on to speak to Mr. Coventry. "I'll do it with pleasure," he says, "if he's in the way;" but I says . . .

'*What's* that? *Objection?* What for, I'd like to know? Because I won too far, I suppose. Objection, indeed! That's good!'

Tomkins and Payne had almost reached the weighing-room door, when someone emerged from it uttering this totally unexpected cry, and the crowd round about immediately began to ask each other what it could mean, and what was wrong. From start to finish the winner had been out by himself; certainly there was no bumping. Weight? Payne and Tomkins were not in the least likely to make a mistake; unless they did it on purpose, and that seemed in the highest degree improbable in the present case. What *could* it be?

Tomkins and Payne entered the room just a trifle disturbed, but confident that there could be nothing really wrong.

'Who's objecting, and what for?' Tomkins asked.

'Wrong age, Mr. Tomkins,' they say. 'Hamlet is said to be a five-year-old,' a courteous official replied.

'What rot!' Tomkins replied, with much wrath and indignation. 'Who says it?' but he began to quake, for assertions so easy of proof are not often made without good reason.

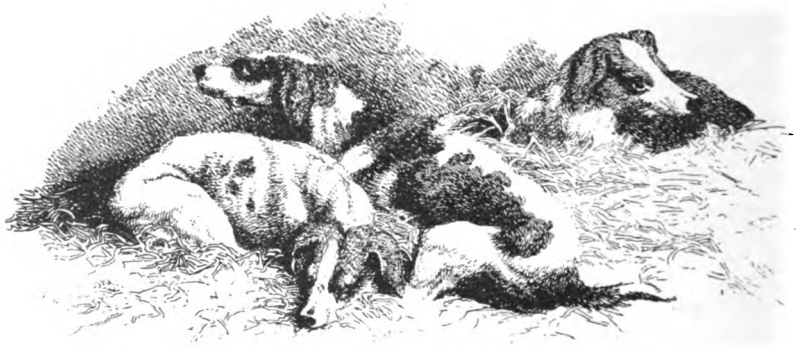
And, of course, the reason was good. Jerry, it appeared, had been standing to watch the race next to an acquaintance, an Irish tatterdemalion, who earned a precarious livelihood on racecourses.

'Ah! it was a good thing,' Jerry had muttered, when he saw Beanfeast beaten and his three pounds done for.

'It wouldn't be so good if I'd been on the second!' his Irish friend had mysteriously remarked, and Jerry had naturally inquired what he meant. Thus it came out, indulgence in the favourite spirit of his native land having rendered him incautiously frank. He had recognised Hamlet as a horse he had known well in Ireland, had taken pains to ask a question or two about the son of Danebury and Gertrude, and had made up his mind, from what he heard, to interview the owner, and see what he could get for holding his tongue. Jerry, eager to do his patron a turn, and not oblivious, it may be, to reviving hopes of his three pounds, persuaded his friend that he would do better to let the owner of the second know of his discovery, and one

way was as satisfactory as the other to the Irishman with an eye for a horse, who was duly rewarded, and drank his own, and Jerry's, and Harry's, and Beanfeast's health continuously for a month, for the matter was very soon settled—objection sustained—race awarded to Beanfeast.

Harry was not altogether satisfied, for Hamlet had beaten him so very easily; but it soon became apparent what a really good horse at this game the five-year-old was, and when, soon afterwards, Harry won another race in quite a moderately good little field, he grew more pleased with himself and old Beanfeast. By degrees, too, he began to ride with judgment, and over a country or on the flat is now far from being despised. The stake which the disqualification of Hamlet had put to his credit was 200*l.*; he divided it with Jerry, who started his long-desired bird-shop, and has done so well with his canaries that he is thinking of launching out wildly into piping bull-finches.



THREE ROUNDS WITH A BISON

BY CAPTAIN THE HON. EVERARD BARING

'SAR! Sar! half-past four, Sar!' and I awake gradually to the fact that I am in a forest hut in the jungle on the Animallai Hills in Southern India, and that my immediate business is to sally forth in the dark after the bull bison which had monopolised my dreams for the last week. I had arrived in my camp the day before, after a dreadful journey of some fifty miles in a springless cart on an apology for a road, followed by a stiff walk of ten miles, and had found my three men whom I had sent on comfortably settled round the small grass hut which was to be my base of operations for the next ten days. A fair-sized stream ran along the valley within a few yards of the small clearing where the hut was built, while, as far as the eye could reach, rolling hills all covered with dark jungle trees stretched far away into the distance.

My three men were Chippani, shikarri and interpreter, Sam, in charge of the commissariat, and a boy dignified by the name of cook, and quite happy with his kitchen of three stones under a tree. Directly on arriving Chippani presents his report, and assures me that 'Plenty game in jungle, Sar;' also, he adds with a grin, 'Plenty leeches too, Sar.' And indeed, as I soon found out, there would not have been much left of me if it had not been for my leech gaiters, which protect one from those pests. Chippani tells me he has secured the services of two jungle men as trackers, and also to show us the way about the country—a most important part of the 'bundabust.'

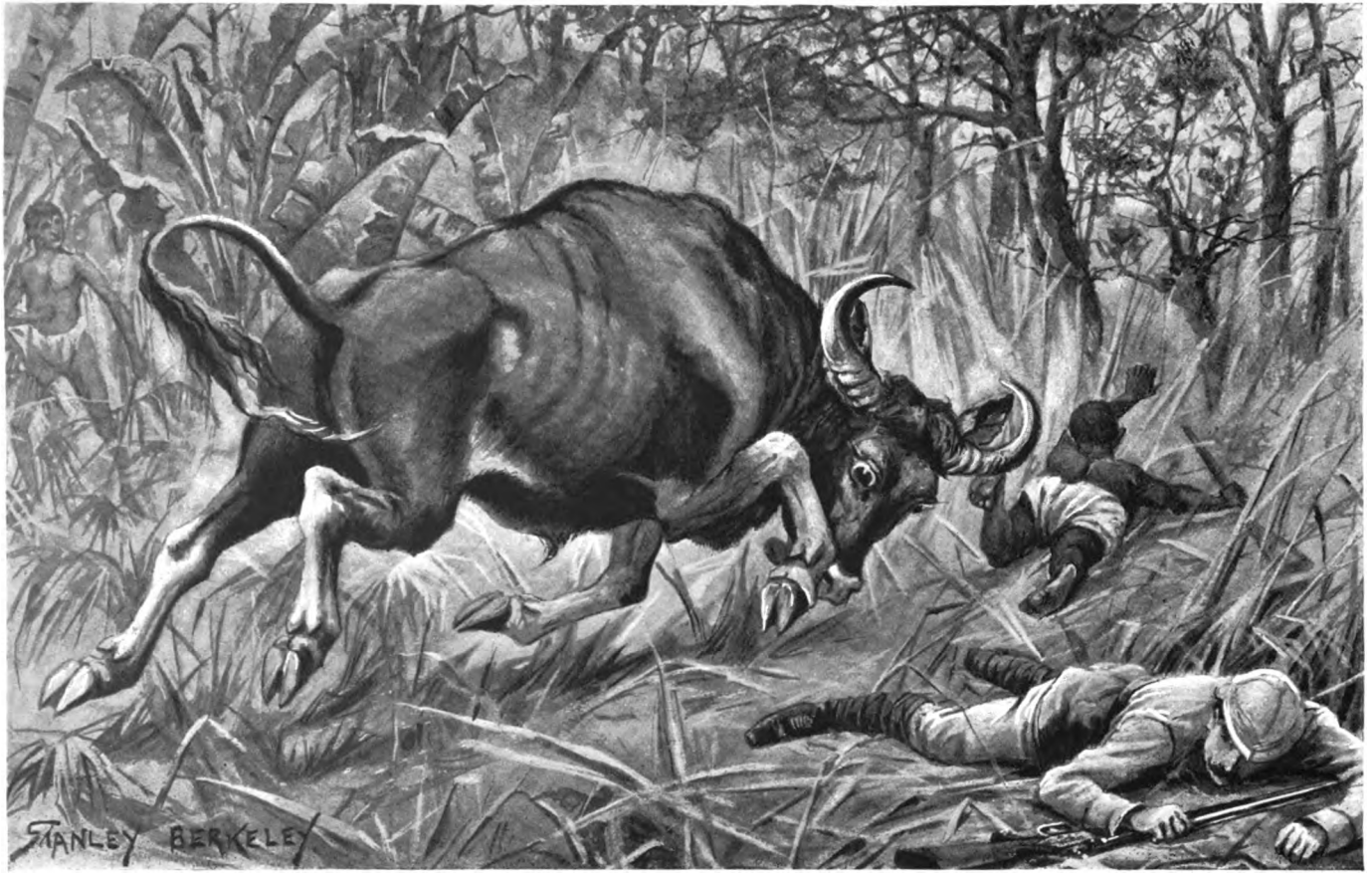
The faithful Sam, having gently but firmly refused to let me sleep another minute the next morning, my head is soon in a bucket of cold water, and as breakfast at 4.45 A.M. is not generally a very large or long meal, my small party is soon in marching order, and, full of hope, in the fresh morning air, we start off into the jungle: first the tracker, Andé by name, carrying the 10-bore, then myself with a long stick, then my shikarri, Chippani, with the ·577 Express, and the rear is brought up by the second tracker, an important member of the staff in that he carries the food for the day, which I fondly hope to eat alongside the biggest of bull bison lying dead on his side.

An hour's walk on a good path, with the daylight just struggling through the teak trees, and as the edge of the sun appears over the horizon we strike into the jungle and begin the search for marks of our game. The jungle is full of life: monkeys and parrots chattering in the tree-tops, a crash as an old boar dashes away, and the fresh pugs of a tiger near a pool of water, all help to keep one thoroughly on the alert. But walk, walk, walk—the sun-hat is called up from the rear of the column; eight, nine o'clock, and still no fresh tracks of bison, when suddenly Andé stops dead, points to the ground, and gives vent to a few unintelligible sounds. Chippani whispers in my ear 'Fresh tracks! Bull!' and off we go, silently and quietly, Andé in front following the faint track like a bloodhound, and never missing a broken twig or a piece of nibbled grass that may tell him how far our quarry is in front of us. An hour goes by—ten o'clock—and the tracker begins to push along quicker as the tracks get fresher, and I begin to think exactly how I shall snatch my rifle from my guide, where I shall aim, and determine, as I suspect many a one has done before, on no account to be flurried. We get to the top of a high ridge and begin to go down the other side, the jungle very thick, and we glide along the track very, very slowly and silently, when I feel Chippani catch hold of my arm like a vice and point to a dark mass in a bush some forty yards off. 'The bull!' he whispers, and, clutching hold of the rifle, I sink on my knee, with my heart going like a sledge-hammer. But it is all very well to say 'shoot' when I can only make out an indefinite mass in a patch of jungle, till I see his head move, and a horn pushing the thorns aside. Now for it! and, guessing where his shoulder ought to be, I pull the trigger. Crash! and then not a sound, while the smoke hangs so thick in the still air as to quite prevent one seeing anything for a few minutes, and we wait, hoping to find him lying dead in another second. But no! the smoke

clears away, we walk to the spot, and there is not a sign of him. My heart sinks as we note the spot where he stood, and not even a drop of blood.

'Well, Chippani,' I say, 'we must follow him up. I'm sure I hit him, and he may be dead close by.' So we walk slowly on along his track, I with my rifle on my shoulder, the trackers on my left, with their eyes fixed on the ground anxiously looking for some blood, and Chippani just behind me. We had gone fifty yards, when I see a huge black head close to the ground, just getting its horns clear of the bushes, not ten yards in front of me. The men do not see him, and I give a frantic yell of 'Look out!' dash my rifle from my shoulder, cock one barrel, and loose it off in the brute's face, as with a vicious snort he dashes at us; and no one who has never seen a bison charge can have any idea of the tremendous pace he can get up in a few yards. As I pull the trigger, I jump aside in the smoke, and, catching my foot in the jungle, fall flat on my face, then struggle to my feet, expecting to see the bull standing over us, and have my second barrel ready for him. But as the smoke clears away slowly there is no bull to be seen, and the second tracker is lying groaning on his side, with a nasty gash in his thigh. My bullet had turned him off me, with the result that he had caught the man a few yards on my left. Well, there was nothing for it but to call time for Round I. and get the wounded man home, which we do with great difficulty at four o'clock in the afternoon, having to carry him most of the long eight miles. The man is badly shaken but not seriously hurt, the injury being a flesh wound only, though deep; so, binding him up as well as we can, and giving him plenty of brandy for his supper, we go to bed vowing speedy vengeance for the next morning, with a lurking hope that we may find the bull dead, as he must have been very badly wounded to have charged as he did.

Next morning we are off at five to the minute, and between two and three hours' hard walking brings us to the spot of our adventures of the day before. Luckily no rain had fallen in the night to obliterate the tracks, and it is easy to see exactly where he went after charging past us. He had gone down the valley for some way, then apparently changed his mind and turned at right angles; and we follow slowly on the tracks, which soon lead into the thickest of thick jungle, uphill. Dangerous work it is, indeed; not every tracker will, unarmed as he is, follow up a wounded bull into thick jungle. But Andé knows no fear, and he goes quietly on, till after half a mile or so his face lights up, as



WITH A VICIOUS SNORT HE DASHED AT US

he points with grim joy to the place where our friend had evidently laid down for the night, and to sundry small drops of clotted blood. There is no doubt about it now! He would never have laid down if he could have helped it, and he must have been very sick. Andé whispers that the bull must be within a mile at most, and with the greatest care we crawl slowly on.

The next mile takes us more than an hour; the tracks are quite fresh, drops of blood are on the leaves he had brushed against, and, with both rifles ready, we get nearer and nearer to him. We are going up a steep hill now, the jungle in places is not quite so thick—open patches here and there. 'There he is!' from Chippani, who has eyes like a hawk, and a snort and a short crash above us tell us we are seen. 'Shoot!' Chippani says, and to our cost I do. With no cover below him, no open place to meet him, and everything in the bull's favour, I ought never to have fired, as by making a flank march I could easily have got above him and in comparative safety. However, there is not much time to think of these things, and as I fire one barrel of the 10-bore into the thicket where the bull is standing he comes down the hill like a steam-engine. I give him the other barrel, but nothing short of instant death would have stopped him then. I turn to get behind a friendly tree I had fortunately noticed out of the corner of my eye, about twenty yards off, and in a second overtake Chippani and Andé making for the same retreat. A noise like a runaway steam-engine tells me he is close behind, and he must have been within three yards when I fall flat on my face, bringing the two men behind me on the top of me, as the huge brute goes right over us a thousand miles an hour, catching my cheek bone with one foot, and treading full on Chippani's thigh with the other. By some extraordinary chance he escaped having his leg broken, owing probably to the ground being very soft, and consequently his leg giving way to the pressure. I am up in a second, rifle gone, blood pouring from my face, and dash for the tree, from behind which I peer cautiously—or incautiously, I should say, as there he is ten yards off, head up, tail in the air, a splendid sight, indeed, but that I was not exactly in the position to admire the beauty of the situation. He sees me, and, with a snort, dashes at the tree. I slip round it, but he is quicker than I, and I feel his breath and foam on my neck, while on the lower side of the tree, which is on the side of a steep hill, he just catches me on the ribs with his horn, and I am hurled into space to land twenty feet up in the air in a thicket of dead bamboos, where I lie, transfixed by thorns like spears, really thinking my

last moment has come. But no, the side of the steep hill is too greasy for him to stop when he has got the pace on, and he dis-

HURLED INTO SPACE

appears, while I climb out of the bamboos, get hold of my rifle, load it, and count up the casualties.

Chippani is lying on the ground with his thigh nearly ground to powder, but Andé comes up smiling and enjoying the fun immensely. Leaving Chippani behind a fallen tree with the brandy flask, Andé and I run along the ridge to see where the beast has gone. We can just make out his back, as he walks slowly down the valley, but as I am beginning to feel faint and sick I return to Chippani, and we lie there for an hour, my chief sensation being as if someone had given me an elaborate thrashing. Chippani says he can hardly walk, and as it is by this time twelve o'clock and ten miles from home, we prepare to crawl sadly back, having had very much the worst of Round II.

HIS FIGHTING DAYS ARE OVER

We get to camp quite beat at 8 P.M., to spend a really miserable evening, my comfort being scarcely enhanced by the fact of the rain coming down in torrents, and entirely flooding the hut. The blow on my cheek bone made it almost impossible to eat anything, and what with aching bones and the rain sleep was out of the question. So at 4 A.M. I wake up Sam, get him to make some hot coffee, and directly the faithful Andé unrolls himself from his blanket propose going out again after the bull. Andé, having had a good dram of arrack, is ready for anything, and we start again, he and I alone this time, with one rifle only,

as I do not feel equal to carrying anything. The rain stops, the stiffness wears off to a certain extent as I walk, and after some hours' crawling through the jungle, trying to puzzle out the tracks, which are nearly obliterated by the rain, we hear our friend snorting and blowing close to where we had left him the day before. We dodge from one tree to another, till there is a crash as if the whole forest were being levelled, and he appears about fifteen yards off, apparently as ready for a fight as ever; but I am behind a good big tree this time, and as the heavy solid bullets of both barrels of the 10-bore hit him full in the chest, his fighting days are over and his four white legs are kicking in the air. Black as ink, with thick, rugged horns, his neck scarred with the marks of many a fight, he looked what he was, a gallant beast ready to fight till he died.

I found afterwards that my shot as he charged had hit him in the forehead, about two inches too high to do any harm. Bad luck it was—a little lower and we should have had no more trouble, while, as far as I could make out from a post-mortem examination, my first shot had hit him in the gullet, not quite enough to kill him, but enough to prevent him feeding at all, and to infuriate him considerably against the human race in general, and myself in particular.

SOLDIER CRICKET

BY CAPTAIN PHILIP C. W. TREVOR

WE play the game with a ball, bats, stumps, and things very much in the same way as other people; but there is an individuality about soldier cricket, for all that. A very great authority on the game has told us that 'A match well made, is a match half won,' and the dictum might be paraphrased, 'A match "well played," is a match more than won.' And 'well played' is of course understood to mean played in a sportsmanlike manner.

To play the game as a sportsman is, I venture to say, the first consideration in soldier cricket. The little episode of the 'intentional wides' bowled in last year's 'Varsity match is still fresh in the memories of most cricketers. Whilst admitting the difficulty of the position created by the present laws, and without entering upon the controversy that still rages on the subject, it is safe to assert that the occurrence would not have been witnessed at Aldershot, Colchester, or Portsmouth.

There are, of course, two main divisions of soldier cricket: Garrison and Regimental matches. The latter are very rightly regarded as the more important, though the play is usually of a higher order in the former. This point is often not appreciated by a visiting eleven, playing against the Garrison team. 'Haven't you got "So-and-so" playing to-day?' one of them will ask. 'No, he's playing for his regiment.' 'But surely he'd get a better match here?' the questioner persists. Then the 'questionee' usually smiles and says, 'Yes, I expect he would.' He doesn't feel bound to enlighten his interviewer at length on the mysteries of the Regimental system.

It is unavoidable that Garrison and Regimental matches should clash sometimes. The former are arranged in the winter, when the fixture lists of the big visiting clubs, such as the I. Z., 'Foresters,' 'Incogs,' are being completed; whilst a variety of reasons make the

arrangement of the latter more or less a matter of the moment. Next to the sportsmanlike spirit before alluded to, the obligation as host is regarded as the most important consideration.

If the occasion is a Garrison match, a member of the visiting eleven is usually told off to each member of the home side, and becomes practically his private guest during the two days of the match.

As a rule the visiting club send the names of their team to the Garrison secretary a day or two beforehand, and the members of the soldier eleven can then select their own guests; but it must always happen that some of the visiting side are unknown to their hosts. The managers of these visiting sides are luckily men who know their job, and the pleasantest of two days is the result. Sometimes, though rarely, a mistake occurs, and a real A1 bounder is let loose upon military hospitality. Then the poor host has a lively time of it. The 'visiting cricket bounder' is usually of a distinct type. He begins by afflicting himself with the idea that he knows all about soldiers, and he insists on the fact being known. The wretched host, who has had some few hours' experience of his guest during the day, leads him into the ante-room a few minutes before dinner is announced, and introduces him to his brother officers. The bounder, who is always on the best possible terms with himself, at once improves the occasion. He usually attacks the Colonel. Now, the Colonel and the majority of the officers have not been near the match, and probably don't even know that there is a match on. The bounder therefore selects cricket in general as his theme, and the current match as an illustration. He is discursive on the day's play, not forgetting his own modest little share therein. The announcement of dinner cuts him short, and if this fact induces him to abandon his recital, he still 'knows all about soldiers,' and will let his audience recognise the fact. Moreover, he is usually by way of being a humorist; and, presuming on his six hours' acquaintance, proceeds to delicately chaff his host. The exact quality of the chaff may be easily imagined. Then something on the table catches his eye, and with engaging candour he compares the piece of plate in question with 'a bit those chaps in the Perthshire Fusiliers have got.' The comparison is, of course, to the advantage of the latter: 'Not but what this is very good, you know,' he kindly adds. As dinner advances he degrades into anecdote, and as the cloth is being removed recounts 'a funny little thing that happened at a mess where I was dining the other night.' The strong point of the story has perhaps reference to the clumsiness of mess-sergeants, or the illiteracy of

mess-waiters, and the bounder recounts it with native tact and taste.

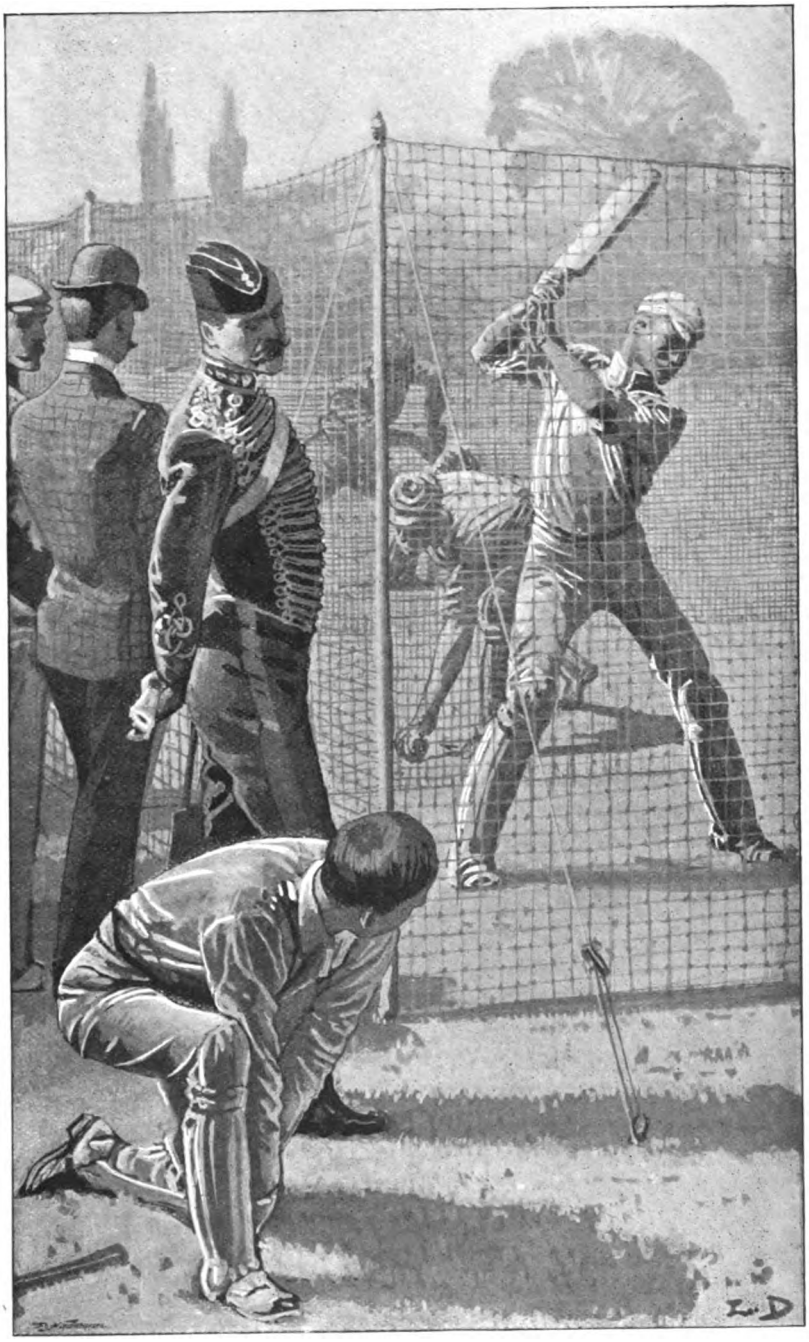
He is got back into the ante-room, where he sits down to a rubber. Here the pressure on the self-restraint valves of the officers is more severe than ever. At length he goes to bed, and, with a little strategy, he can be avoided at breakfast next day. He comments on the emptiness of the mess-room while he is breakfasting, and says something facetious about the Colonel or parades. Then he departs for the cricket field *en route* for the station. His cricket host that night enters the mess with a chastened air, but with a soul full of relief. 'Don't Garrison matches last three days, Tuppy?' asks the Senior Major innocently. 'Thought we might have the pleasure of seeing your friend at dinner again to-night.' 'O Heavens!' groans Tuppy, 'that's my last match for the Garrison this year!'

The visiting cricket bounder is luckily a 'rara avis,' Garrison matches being usually as much appreciated in the mess-room as in the cricket field, so that members of the foreign side have often invitations from two or three different messes when it is known that they are coming down to play.

The 'General' is an important factor in soldier cricket. When a new one is appointed it is asked, as a matter of course, 'What sort of a fellow is he for cricket?' As a rule most generals support and grant facilities for the game. Sometimes you get one 'who knows all about cricket,' and that is fatal. I can recall a couple of instances. It must be remembered that the Garrison Cricket Ground is nearly always Government land, so that the General can use it for digging shelter trenches or making encampments, if he is so minded. In the case in question the cricket field formed about one-thirtieth of a large stretch of Government drill ground and was situated in one corner thereof. Some of us one day in the winter observed a company drilling on the cricket ground. With great lightheartedness they had removed the posts and rope which enclosed the square in the centre, and were exemplifying the value of a military problem performed upon level ground. We therefore interviewed the Chief Staff Officer, who promised to obtain the great man's decree that the sanctity of that patch of forty yards square should not be violated. Someone or other, I believe, has said that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing; but it is a far more dangerous thing to assume that you have a little knowledge. Now, this particular General accused himself, most unjustly, of knowing a little about cricket. The Chief Staff Officer kept his promise; but the General was

'pleasantly superior.' 'The best thing in the world for the pitch, I assure you. Why, the best cricket grounds are used for football in winter.' And the Chief Staff Officer reverently said, 'Yes, sir,' as he would have said if the General had suggested the substitution of goal posts for wickets in the interests of the game. So rope and posts were relegated to the pavilion, and the ravages of ammunition boots were repaired by special fatigue parties. However, it was an understood thing between ourselves that we should keep our own little commands from marching over the holy spot when possible, and when we could not do that, arrange that the gait of the men marching thereon should be like unto the gait of Agag the king. Mounted officers, too, assisted us, and gave 'the pitch' a wide berth when 'taking up a point.'

The winter passed and the drill season set in. At the end of April there was a big field day, just a week before the first Garrison match. There had been a lot of rain, and the ground was very soft. We had some distinguished foreigners amongst the spectators at the saluting flag; and whenever the General got a good audience to play to, he was sure to have a fine game with his one cavalry regiment. We in the infantry were marched up to the top of the hill and marched down again and put on one side. Then the artillery were got rid of and pushed into a corner, and the ground was cleared for cavalry. So up they came, and they walked and trotted and cantered and halted, and pulled their swords out and put them back again, and went through all their pretty tricks with the regularity of well-trained poodles. The distinguished foreigners were delighted and shouted 'Bravo!' and 'Magnifique!' and clapped their hands, whilst the General purred contentedly and assured them that 'it was all done by kindness.' But he had yet a surprise in store for them—and for us. The finishing touch was yet to be put on the work. He had determined that the climax was to be a cavalry charge. 'All my cavalry,' he explained to the distinguished foreigners, 'will charge from one end of the ground to the other,' and by way of showing these aliens the perfect control that is exercised over British cavalry by their officers, he did not give the order to halt until the line was within some twenty paces of the far railings. The charge was magnificent. The line halted as one man (or as one horse—I don't know which is the correct expression). The General's delight was unbounded. He tried, however, to assume a sort of this-is-nothing-for-me look, whilst the crowd shouted and the foreigners wept and embraced each other. But the fate of that



AT THE PRACTICE NETS

poor little green patch was sealed. The charge had swept over it, and cricket that year was ruined. Visiting elevens came and went. They thanked us for our hospitality, but 'couldn't understand why the wicket played so badly;' and when an impertinent subaltern asked a distinguished M.C.C. committeeman one day if Pickford put his horses out to grass at Lord's to improve the pitch, he could not understand the allusion.

Yet another case. The General who commanded the troops in another large station also knew a bit about cricket. Now, it happened that this cricket ground had only one defect. There were five large trees in one corner which cast their shadow right across the pitch about half-past five to half-past six in the evenings of July and August, so that the side batting during that hour was under a great disadvantage. We therefore petitioned the General for their removal, and were particularly glad when he said he would come and see for himself. 'Bring him up about 6.15 P.M.,' we said to the A.D.C. But the A.D.C. murmured something about the importance of the General's time, that we must take our chance, &c., and rode off, the pattern of an up-to-date mystical A.D.C.

The General actually arrived on the ground at 12 noon with his staff to meet the Cricket Committee and decide the point. The General did the talking. 'Which, gentlemen, are the trees?' They were pointed out. The General surveyed them critically for a few minutes, as if to discover that they were standing correctly to attention, and then remarked, 'Well, gentlemen, I can see no shadow.' And he looked sternly at the Cricket Committee. I do not think that under any circumstances British discipline will ever be found wanting. Seldom has it been tried so high. Not a muscle moved in the face of a single staff officer present. They all sat rigid, erect, and respectful. 'Not though the soldier knew some one had blundered.'

For a moment the Cricket Committee could hardly believe that the General was serious. So no one replied. Then the General wheeled his horse, and remarking, 'The trees will remain,' rode off to settle other matters which demanded his attention. For a few seconds the Cricket Committee stared at each other in an inane and helpless manner. Then the Cricket Secretary informed us as the result of private research and with much emphasis that he was eternally condemned. We expressed no interest in his future, but reverently departed to ponder these things.

There are, of course, instances the other way. Some years ago

we played a Garrison match against a well-known Nomad Club, and at the end of the second day time alone saved us from defeat. When stumps were drawn the visiting side hurried off to catch their train to town. One of them, however, who was going direct to Cambridge, had time to dress leisurely.

As he was doing so a quiet man wandered into the Pavilion. The man dressing at once engaged him in conversation. The quiet man's share in the talk was for the most part confined to civil acquiescence in the younger man's remarks. 'We should have licked these soldier Johnnies, you know, if we hadn't started two hours late yesterday. The General wouldn't let 'em off parade or something. Awful rot having a man like that to command, isn't it?' 'Possibly the General didn't know there was a Garrison match on,' pleaded the quiet man. 'Oh, he'd have staff chappies who ought to tell him these things, wouldn't he?' The quiet man acquiesced. Then the younger man told him a lot of interesting things about the cricket team last year at Harrow: how many runs he had made and how he was booked for his blue at Cambridge, with a variety of other information which could not fail to interest a stranger.

At last he left. Some days afterwards the Chief of the Staff bore down on two or three of us who were practising at the nets. He was in a bad humour even for a Chief Staff Officer who is working hard for a C.B. 'I wish if you fellows have got a grievance about not getting off parade for a Garrison match you'd have the pluck to put it forward through your own Colonels and not sneak it round to the General privately.' Not a very polite method of introducing the subject, so we scarcely troubled to assure him that we had taken no steps in the matter. We were glad to note, however, that Garrison matches in future started at 11.30 A.M. sharp. It was months afterwards before we got the clue to the reason of this excellent officer's wrath. That quiet man was the General, and he had presumably been saying a word or two to the Chief of his Staff.

Garrison elevens in large stations are usually strong in batting and suffer like most amateur teams from lack of bowling. As this is often the plight of the visiting side, two days are insufficient to finish the match when the wicket is good. On the United Service Ground, Portsmouth, unless there has been rain, it is the exception rather than the rule for a good match to be played out. Signs are not wanting that the doom of Garrison cricket is practically sealed in England. The drill and manœuvre season unfortunately being coincident with the cricket season, matches

have often either to be scratched or very unrepresentative elevens put into the field. The big visiting clubs are beginning to recognize this. These clubs consist of men who are for the most part busy all the year and who take a month or six weeks' holiday in the summer to play cricket. Naturally they do not care to risk having two, four, or six of these days blank, or to travel some way to a military station to play against a side of the calibre of their own village club. Quite recently a well-known amateur, who is particularly fond of soldier cricket, gave it as his opinion that this feeling was gaining ground amongst civilian clubs. 'I went down to play at Aldershot,' he said, 'last year. Only two of their regular side were playing, and we finished the match on a plumb wicket before lunch on the second day. There are ten or fifteen thousand soldiers there, aren't there? Surely they could let eleven off to play cricket.' That is the point. Either, it seems, arrangements should be made by which a representative eleven should take the field, or clubs should be distinctly informed that the conditions of the match (if played at all) are subject to the complex mysteries of military emergency. At present, however, confidence is shaken, and Garrison cricket as an institution will die a natural, though possibly a lingering, death.

Regimental cricket, however, has good prospects and plenty of vitality. This is so, partly because matches are easily arranged, easily postponed, and easily rearranged, and chiefly because a Regimental cricket match is very properly two-thirds a social function and an act of hospitality, and one-third cricket. The cricket played may be as keen, if not as skilful, as that witnessed in Garrison matches, and on the whole it is in Regimental matches that what may be called the principle of soldier cricket is best exemplified.

I suppose, with our system of big gates, talent money, &c., it is unavoidable that in first-class cricket a man will take every possible advantage which the laws allow, and sometimes try the umpire a bit high, to get a little more. I cannot express it better than by saying, 'This is just what does *not* happen in Regimental cricket.' It would be easy to exemplify. For instance, you would never submit a doubtful point for decision to your own umpire (who is usually a N. C. O. or private, without much judicial experience). Sometimes a 'How's that?' will slip out, but it would be followed by a 'No, never mind!' or an 'As you were!' or some such note of recall, if the appealer had time to recover himself. However, it is not necessary to multiply instances. Everyone knows the real spirit in which the game should be played, and if in the heat of

a big public contest, or in order to cope with others, a man unwittingly transgresses against the true code, the first-class cricket system may be held at any rate to be partially responsible. In Regimental cricket there is no such excuse; and no excuse would be made for the man who so lapsed from the narrow way. There is no getting over the fact that cricket is not a popular game with the rank and file—in fact, it would be strange if it were. At eighteen or nineteen years of age it is a bit late to start a cricket education, even if your recruit is a good athlete. Where he has to be practically taught everything the difficulty is greater. The young officer, keen on the game, does not always recognise this fact, but conviction is brought home to him by degrees. Every now and then a man enlists who has played the game from his youth up, and who really enjoys it. But he finds it very difficult to get practice. He doesn't care to bowl at the officers' net for some three hours, with the off chance of five minutes' batting at the end of the afternoon. The men's practice ground is of course open to him (where one exists), but its contour usually attracts him more as a soldier than as a cricketer. Why doesn't some Tommy Atkins' grievancemonger take the subject up and air it? No cricket grounds for our soldiers! To be sure it isn't a very big grievance, but ''twould serve.'

However, the fact remains that, generally speaking, the British private cares nothing or little about cricket; and it is well known that Thomas A., feeling perhaps that his attendance at the canteen has been too infrequent, and seeking the means of extending his patronage towards that institution, withdraws his cricket subscription from the company club, in preference to severing other associations. In his own untranslatable phraseology, he is no longer 'for it.'

In the future it may be otherwise. When the education boom is a thing of the past, and the pendulum of common-sense swings firmly and steadily once more, the private soldier will have time to observe and to think. Then the charm of the game will attract him, and he will cultivate its acquaintance; so that in time the rank and file may perchance have their due share in enjoying the pleasures, and in upholding the excellence, of soldier cricket.

DIANA GASTRONOMICA

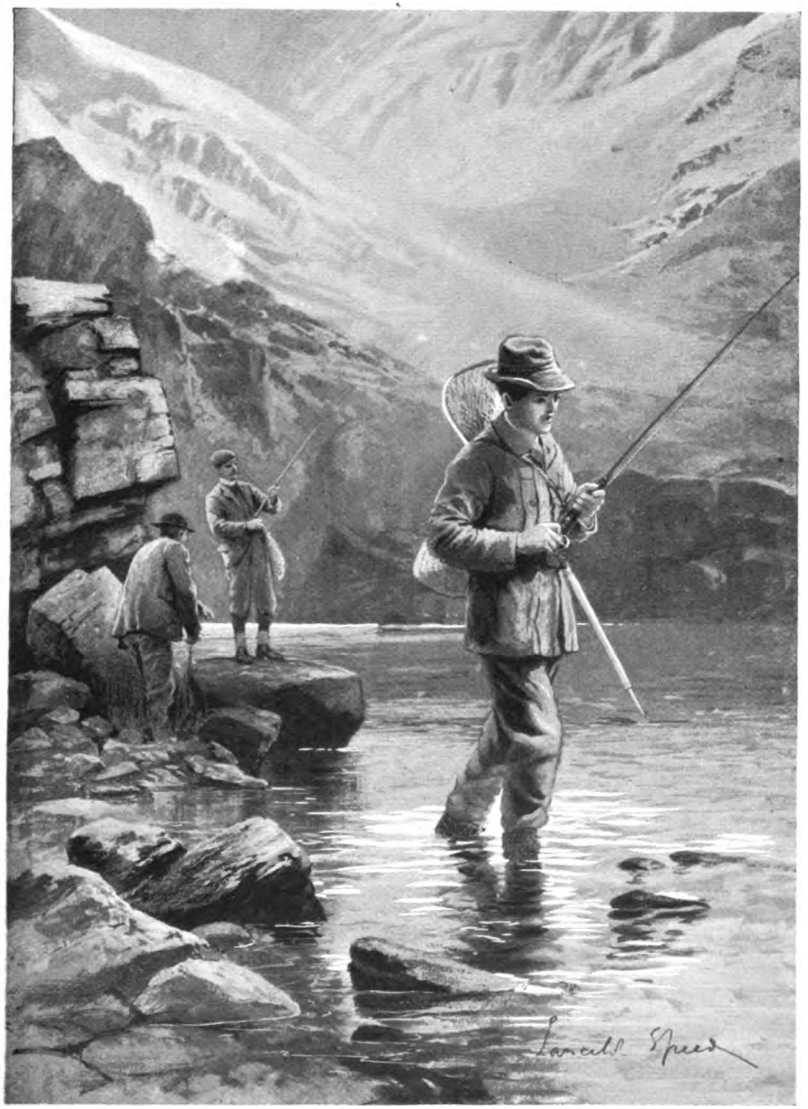
BY GUY CADOGAN ROTHERY

HEALTHY appetite and good digestion are among the best of gifts at the disposal of Diana, patroness of hardy sport. Who that has experienced and enjoyed a stiff day's work over hill and dale has not realised in his own person the preciousness of the hunter's proverbial hunger? Some will say that the sportsman accustomed to 'roughing it' is a mere *gourmand*, urged on to valiant trencher-deeds by a sharpening of the appetite with nature's sauce; but I believe him to be a true *gourmet*, able to appreciate sweet simplicity on the one hand, and yet evolve bright flashes of invention in preparing for the table such spoils as fall to his gun or rod.

This may be special pleading; for, although ignorant of the science of modern gunners shooting over lavishly preserved ground, rough work over scrub and mountain-side is not unknown to me, and though by no means a *belle fourchette*, I nevertheless can lay claim to some acquaintance with the fine art of cookery. Years ago when among the Italian Alps, after two hours of tramping over snow, scrambling down ravines to scale the rocky acclivities of frowning mountains, the prowess of a local *chasseur* and guide was the means of introducing three schoolboys (myself of the number) to the delights of fresh chamois steaks and cutlets. We were ready for dinner, but had little else besides bread, so, having admired the chamois with its curved horns, we speedily prepared a steak and some cutlets, which we grilled on rough wooden skewers over the embers of a few gnarled roots and grass. A few bilberries and a lump of sugar did duty for currant jelly. After that experience we always voted for grilled fresh chamois, when such a dainty was to be had in the village,

deeming the custom of hanging the game in larder for a fortnight of questionable value. It was in these regions, close by the Madonna della Fenestra, that we were rewarded for our patient attention to a diminutive lake with full creels of magnificent trout. The lake occupied an almost circular bowl at the foot of a precipitous mountain peak, the lower part of which lay hidden under an immense sheet of half-frozen snow. Only some stunted grass, a few hardy ferns, rare gentian and edelweiss grew in the small amphitheatre, which was surrounded by towering rocks on all sides, save at the south and north, where there were gaps, the gateways to a famous pass. Dark and unpromising appeared the chill lake waters. However, rumours of fine trout proved true; the fish rose greedily to our flies, though it is doubtful if they ever saw their like in nature. Even fly-fishing in such a spot is cold work, and we were glad when the hour for retreat came. A breakneck scamper down the pass brought us to a barnlike inn opposite the chapel della Fenestra. Frying-pans were uninviting, so, having prepared our trout, we provided each fish with white robes of buttered notepaper, and, placing them on forked sticks, grilled them to a turn. Never were trout more worthy three ravenous fisherfolk. Later, and elsewhere, I discovered that trout fresh from the river, gently stewed in white wine thickened with a ball of butter rolled in flour and finely-chopped parsley, was a refinement not to be despised.

While on the Mediterranean shores I was not only initiated into the mysteries of that powerful gastronomic poem, the *bouille-a-baisse*, but learnt to make a dainty meal of very small fry. First to demand attention was the purple sea-urchin, with white or pink-tipped spikes. Split in twain, an orange-like interior was revealed, the divisions being alternately brown and red. The red portions carefully scooped out with a spoon and spread on buttered brown bread rivalled the oyster in delicacy of flavour By the way, the common limpet, with lemon-juice and pepper, is a fair substitute for the more aristocratic bivalve. Sea-anemones, of special kinds, duly dressed, then rolled in flour and fried in boiling fat, are a dainty food. Then there was our cunning friend the octopus. Ugly-looking customer truly, but affording good sport. It is necessary to have a luring rod—a long cane with a bunch of weeds and a piece of raw fish. This is held in the left hand, while the right grasps a three-pronged trident. The rule of the game is either from a boat or from the shore to lure the eight-legged monster from his lair. He comes floating



THE FISH ROSE GREEDILY TO OUR FLIES

through the blue waters, tentacles pendant and waving, the hooded head erect with its prominent eyes; or it will crawl along the rocks, tentacles moving quickly, its many suckers giving it a firm hold. When at striking distance, the trident comes into play. But the octopus is vigilant and agile, and when necessary knows how to envelope itself in an inky cloud by the sudden ejection of *sepia*. If caught, the best plan is to grasp the creature and deftly turn the hood over its eyes—that is, if you have the courage so to do, for its moving eight legs are unpleasant. Well, this uncanny denizen of the deep, if cut up and stewed with a few sweet herbs, is a gelatinous delight. Only you must do the stewing while you lounge on the grass beneath pine-trees, the stewpan deftly propped between two rocks, with glowing embers beneath, the blue sea dancing a few feet below. It is well to remember, in dealing with almost all fish save the finest, that a judiciously used onion will work wonders. Many river fish that are apt to taste muddy will be made palatable if cooked with 'puddings in their bellies' composed of bread-crumbs, flour, pot-herbs, and plenty of onions; then either stew in a very little acidulated water, or bake and baste with butter and vinegar.

Quail-shooting within sound of the rippling waves has its charms, more especially if part of the spoil is cooked for luncheon either at a near-by farmhouse or under the shadow of some protecting ruined wall. Let the quail be roasted, and if possible larded and wrapped in a vine-leaf. Those fat rascals, the *becfigues*, gorged with many an assault on luscious grapes and figs, should also be cased in a garment of lard and an outer jacket of green vine-leaves. Then they may be roasted on the spit and devoured with a sense of gratitude that such simple fare can never pall. There is great virtue in the herbs of the field, both as edibles and as fuel. Roast your quail or *becfigue* over dried vine-branches, and acknowledge that there is wisdom in the latter part of the statement. For your stew of rabbit or boar, wild thyme is desirable both inside and outside the pot, or under the grill. I have found a few pungent juniper-berries an excellent addition to a *civet de sanglier*. And these two, thyme and juniper, are the only things that make goat-flesh tolerable. Of other herbs, cherish the dandelion, king of salad meats; make use of wild sorrel to give a refreshing acidity to sauce or soup, and the olive, wherever procurable, green or brown and dripping with oil, to add a zest reminiscent of more epicurean feasts.

The first time I tried juniper-berries was one night when

we found ourselves in the forest, far from any village, and decided to camp out under the shadow of a few large erratic rocks, piled up into a fantastic kind of watch-tower. Our havresacs were deplorably lean; however, we had a fat young tusker with us, shot only an hour or two before. A brief twilight had been succeeded by darkness, and our small fire served but to light up our watch-tower and a small circle about us; all beyond was blackness; even the sky above, with its countless stars, looked dark. Piggy soon lost its skin; the liver, bruised in a pannikin, was set to simmer on the fire with acid wine and a lump of butter (for rich gravy, bruised liver and vinegar and a touch of aromatics are sovereign); to this we added a little meat, and then, finding that something more was required, the crackling juniper-branches, sending forth showers of protesting sparks, brought happy inspiration. Three or four berries were plucked and placed in the stew, and the necessary savour obtained. To follow this we had nought save black bread and that hardest-hearted of cheeses made from skimmed sheep's milk; tough as the nether millstone it was, but hacked into hunks and held over the embers until it dropped in a green and silver stream on slices of bread, it became more than acceptable.

A memorable dinner still lingers fondly in memory. Four hungry anglers had enjoyed a long tramp over hill and valley, passing through dense masses of myrtle, arbutus, and cystus, and reaching the banks of a reputed troutful stream, worked hard for hours with but scanty results. Dusk was upon us, and we turned about to search for food and lodging. Half a mile away, by the dusty roadside, stood an inhospitable-looking square-built stone house. We were met at the door by a solemn *vigneron*, who bade us welcome to his poor abode. Of food he could only offer bread, chestnuts, and eggs. Espying a skinny, long-legged fowl, with reckless extravagance we put a price upon its head. Remember, there were four anglers and a peasant host. Well, mounting by way of a ladder to the first floor (the restless cattle were beneath us), a bare cement flooring, beds of straw, and firearms hung on the walls were revealed by the bright glare from crackling wood in a great stone hearth. Calling for an onion, it was cut in shreds, and placed in a saucepan with butter, tossed about for a few minutes, and then covered with five small cups of water, a liberal allowance of pounded goat-cheese (grater we had none), four whipped eggs, pepper and salt, and buttered toast cut in dice were added. Meanwhile, we had cleaned our trout, and wrapped them in buttered paper to roast in the ashes.

Our fowl, skinned and split in half, was liberally buttered and peppered, and then grilled. Potatoes, alas! were missing, but floury chestnuts proved a not unpleasant variant. Grand triumphs of all! a sweet omelette and certain glorious *timbales sucrées*. A little flour and water and fresh eggs gave me the wherewithal for the omelette, and in its velvety folds I hid some commonplace grape and apple jam. On the hearth I found a big cauldron of yellow maize in a violent state of eruption, and some of this I placed to cool and set firm in little tin

WE LAY BACK ON THE STRAW IN THE GLARE OF THE FLICKERING FLAMES

mugs In another mug I made a sweet sauce by diluting the grape jam with a very little boiling water. In less than half an hour we sat down—Turkish fashion, with plate on knees and dish in the midst of our circle on the floor—to a meal fit for worthy souls:

Soup.
Minestra alla Minuta.
Fish. Truite, sauce au beurre.
Rôt.
Poulet à la Spatchcock. Purée de Marrons.
Entremets sucrés.
Omelette au confiture. Timbales de Maize aux Chasseurs.
Café noir.

Though modest the deed, it is one to be proud of. As we lay back on the straw in the glare of the flickering flames, contentedly sipping our café, I had but one regret--the absence of Teniers to depict the scene.

Now that those Bohemian days are over, the memory dwells fondly on the pleasant toil, the old fatigues, the small delights of lucky bags, the enduring joys of the glorious scenery. Well, I hold that the art of making *Minestra alla Minuta*, of turning out a good omelette, and the happy invention of those maize timbales with grape-jam sauce is cheaply acquired at the cost of any amount of 'roughing it.'

BLUE-ROCK SHOOTING FROM A BOAT

BY A. M. SUTHERLAND GRÆME

TAKE it all round, blue-rock pigeon shooting from a boat at the cliffs is hard to beat. And this for several reasons. It needs quite as much skill, possesses as much variety, and is capable of yielding more excitement, than any other shooting. It is in some ways unique. Instead of standing on terra firma, you shoot from a boat which is always more or less unsteady, even on the calmest day. Instead of keepers and beaters, butts to stand in, or hedges to line, you have a couple of boatmen managing a 12- or 13-foot boat, and a long line of cliffs, more or less inaccessible, pierced here and there with caves and crannies, big and small, deep and shallow; and instead of the restful greens and browns of an inland landscape there is a cruel glare from the smooth surface of the sea, while your attention is constantly distracted by cormorants, guillemots and sea-parrots flying, diving, and screaming in all directions.

Then, the pigeon's flight is quite unlike any other bird's, sometimes slow, but oftener extremely fast; it will swoop, soar, twist like a snipe, and whisk round a corner like lightning.

You can shoot sitting or standing, but in either case it is very necessary that you should keep cool, and not stagger about with your gun at full-cock. Experienced gunners may smile, but when

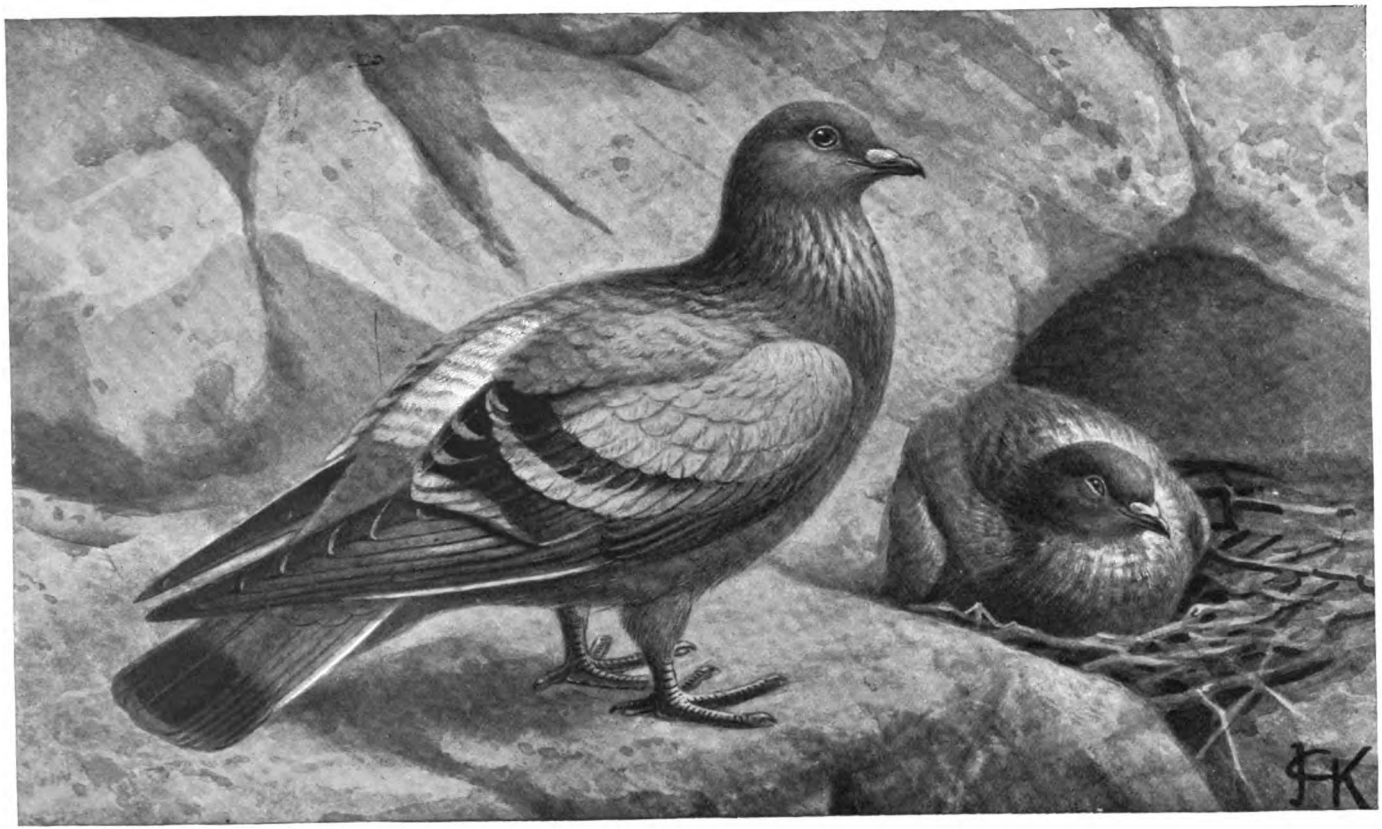
they have tried to stand unsupported in a small boat, with even the slightest motion, they will realise how possible it is to fall.

You need not worry about your retriever; there are no runners at the cliffs; winged birds as well as dead ones fall in the water, and are retrieved with a rake-handled landing-net. Lastly, your cartridges are lying handy by your side, instead of being round a beater's neck and nowhere near when badly wanted.

Pigeon-shooting requires a certain amount of what may be called 'cliff-craft.' A couple of strangers would be heavily handicapped against men who were conversant with both sport and locality; nor can anyone pick up a thorough knowledge of either in a short time. It has taken me years to know my cliffs, and I dare say I have still more to learn.

Cliff-craft consists in knowing every cave and the usual lines of flight out of each, in understanding where to lie to intercept homeward-bound birds at sunset, and, above all, in familiarity with every outlying rock and reef, showing perhaps at low water, awash at half tide, but wholly submerged at full flood. I know nothing better calculated to make a serious man say a bad word than a bump against a sunken rock just as a bouquet of blue-rocks is coming out of a big cave. Besides these things, you must know where it is safe to land and climb after a pigeon which has fallen dead upon a ledge, and whether you ought to follow a winged bird which is flapping its way along the top of the water into the recesses of a doubtful-looking cavern. In short, it is with pigeon-shooting as with all other sports—you must know all about it if you want to score a success. I have been told by men who acknowledge having 'once been after pigeons,' that it was 'disappointing, wasting a whole day, and precious little shooting after all.' Well, my experience differs from theirs, and I will try to describe an afternoon's sport where the pigeons were plentiful, the shooting fairly good, and the result a record bag.

It was one of the last days of August. There were three guns—one too many for our small boat; but we were confident in each other's steadiness, and we arranged to put one gun in the bows while the other two shared the stern of the boat between them. We were favoured with a perfect day, a slight offshore breeze, a good tide, and two boatmen who knew the locality and how to work the boat to the best advantage. Half-past three or even four o'clock in the afternoon is quite soon enough to begin shooting, as the caves are deserted at an earlier hour; so after a delightful sail down the sound we round a low rocky point and pull for a small shingly cove, where we are to leave our mast



THE BLUE-ROCK PIGEON—MALE AND FEMALE

and sail, so as to clear the boat as much as possible for the guns.

Slowly we glide into the cove, past a curious monolith of rock forty feet high, which almost blocks the passage. As the boat touches the beach a couple of pigeons are off from a hole opposite —a sweet shot had our guns been loaded. Mast and sail landed, the forward gun steps into the bows and hangs a well-filled cartridge-bag to the prow; the others hang theirs close under the after thwart, out of everyone's way, yet quite handy; the men back quietly out, and in a minute we are at the first cave. Here we have to pull past the cave's mouth and turn back inside a low reef. 'Are you ready?' One of the men thumps his oar in the rowlock. All quiet! 'Thump again.' 'Look out!' We hear the peculiar flip flap of pigeons' wings far away in the dark cavern, in a moment a pigeon is out, whisking sharp to the left, is round a jutting rock in a twinkling, with a charge of No. 5 a yard behind him. Here come three more—one down, the others away, while our bow gun is reloading; then some more—a right and left from the bows, a smart crossing shot from the stern, and the cave is empty. We back out into open water and pull to the next cave, which is so close that I have never been able to understand why they are two caves, and not one. This is a grand cavern, a show-place for tourists, but not good for pigeons until late in the evening, when much firing has driven them from more exposed places.

We pull round the usual protecting low reef, and find ourselves at the mouth of a splendid arched tunnel some 20 ft. high and as broad. The tunnel runs inland 50 or 60 yards, and at the end broad daylight shows that there is a big shaft to the cliff top like a great chimney, where the ground has at some far distant date fallen in. With an easterly gale and terrific sea the scene is grand beyond description, but, thank goodness! there is no easterly gale now. A few thumps with the oar, the noise echoing through the arched rocks, but no pigeons—the firing at the last cave has disturbed them. 'Never mind, there'll be plenty when we return,' and so we leave the lower rocks and steer across a wide bay towards the high cliffs opposite, where we can soon distinguish the biggest cave, with a few pigeons disappearing at one of its many entrances, while cormorants and guillemots are hastily securing front places for the coming show.

The big cave is at one extremity of a small horseshoe-shaped bay, perhaps a couple of gunshots across; the cliffs here are 180 ft. sheer down into three- or four-fathom water. It has many

exits—one principal huge arch, the rest narrow, perpendicular slits in the rock. Our plan is to land one gun on a reef across the bay, where he can not only shoot at pigeons from the big cave, but command a smaller one close to his own stand, then as quietly as possible get into positions in the boat, so that the stern gun takes the main exit and the bow gun the numerous slits. And now a bang from an oar produces a decided commotion within; some pigeons sitting close to the cave's mouth are out and away; the shots startle others; the blue-rocks come pouring out in numbers from the arched cavern, and are slipping in twos and threes through the slits. But the stern gun has emptied both barrels at the first pigeons out, and so the main pack get off untouched. However, more are coming. It is difficult to pick out a bird; nearly all from the big entrance hug the cliffs and curl round the horseshoe before soaring up and over the cliff-top to avoid the gun on the reef. The bow gun has the best shots, as the birds come in smaller numbers; but all the guns are warm when the last pigeon is off.

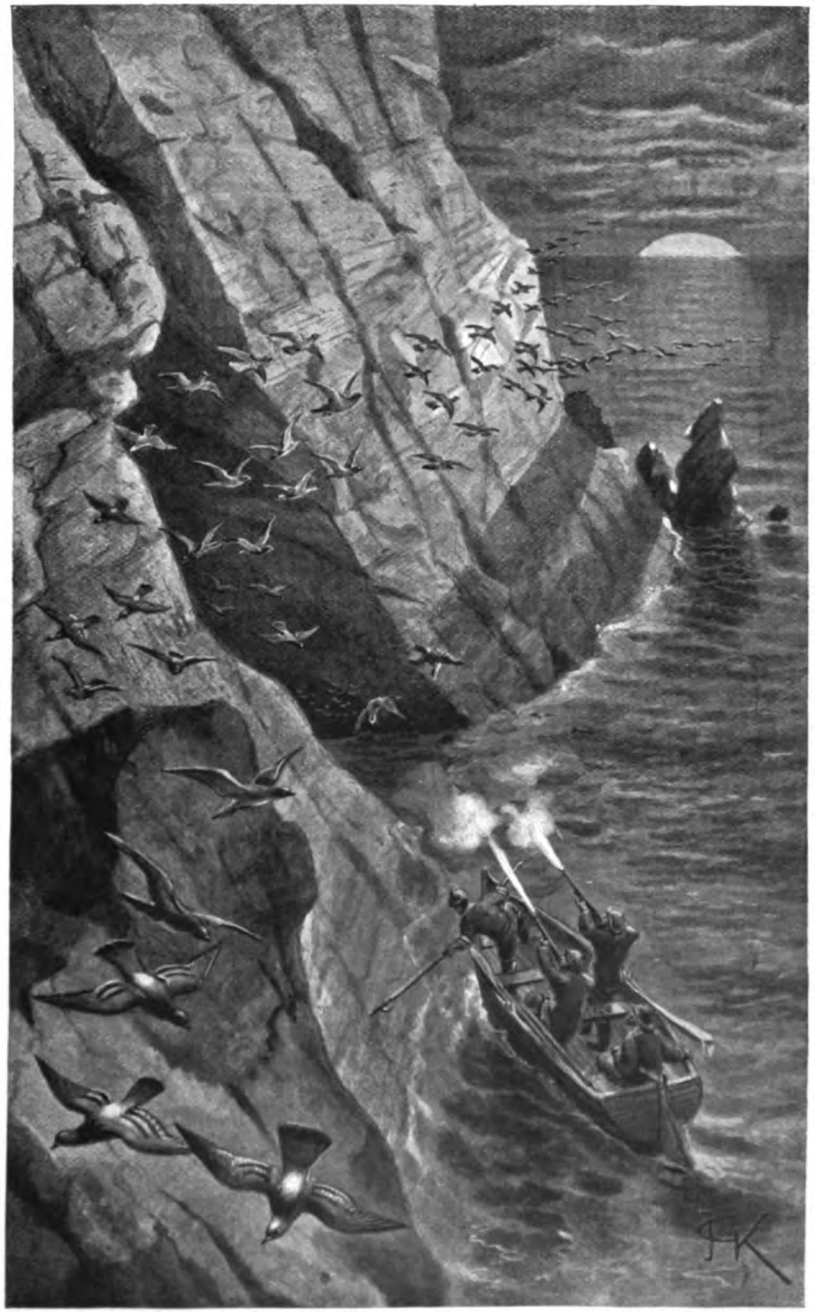
A dozen blue-rocks are floating in the water, each in a little oily lake of its own, and many empty cartridge-cases are bobbing about, just afloat, and no more.

The bow gun claims six pigeons, and two more which he thinks fell round the corner. Ah! that corner; it is curious what becomes of all the pigeons which fall round it, or any other corner for that matter.

I very modestly claim three, but boatman James says 'fower, forbye ane in yon crannie.' The third gun has two in the water, and brings three more picked up on the reef; while we look for the one in the 'crannie.' There he is, sure enough; but noise won't bring him out, so the boat is brought near, and we poke him out with the rake handle. Of course a slight swell unsteadies the boat just as he flies off, and he gets away with four barrels ringing after him.

We now re-ship our third gun, and having picked up the birds, pull on past the big cave to a small hole in an angle. The pigeons must fly forwards and one falls to the bow gun. The next hole is larger. One stern gun gets a right and left, while the other stops a bird back.

Onwards, the cliffs getting lower, past several likely-looking caves. If shallow, the birds are off out of shot; if deep, there are presumably no ledges for pigeons to stand upon; anyhow, our thumps startle no birds. Then we sight a wide-mouthed cave packed with blue-rocks in full sight of us. We pull very quietly;



SHOOTING FROM THE BOAT

no use, though—they see us and are away. Yes, but there are plenty more perched on the near side of the cave, where they cannot see us, nor we them. We glide within shot, and two fall to the six barrels. While picking them up a big flock are coming past at a fair height and at top speed; two more topple over, and fall with a splash close to the boat—pretty shooting. Still onwards to the last cave, a deep, square-shaped cavern with but one great entrance. We pull round this, keeping well out to sea, and, filling our pockets with cartridges, land on a reef, where one gun takes all birds flying to the right, and the other two the larger numbers, which may be depended on to go to the left.

The boat goes back to the cave's mouth, and after a pause we get a beautiful bouquet of blue-rocks. The sound of many wings first, then the little grey specks in the gloom, and then a wild rush of pigeons to the right, to the left, high up, low down, and all in a monstrous hurry. The firing pretty wild, too; it is difficult to single out a bird among so many. Yet we pick up ten, some in the water, others on the rocks; and then the whisky flask is handed round, and we drink 'success,' while our boatmen enjoy a well-earned rest.

We then pull leisurely back. Some of the smaller holes now hold a pigeon or two, and flocks pass along the cliff-top, seeking safety, and not knowing where it may be found. The cave at the horseshoe bay is not so full as it was, but a goodly number have taken refuge there, and this time all three guns are ready for the rush. The shooting is steadier, too, and eight blue-rocks are added to the pile in the boat. We now bring the boat to the centre of the little bay and wait for homing pigeons. There is no shooting prettier or more difficult than this, as you have to fire at birds which, coming over the high cliffs, drop almost like a stone to the level of their cave, and then dart in at any pace you like; or they come round a corner low down, see the boat, and soar up and over the top. The pigeons generally come singly or in pairs, and plenty of cartridges are wasted, while two birds are fished out of the water. A second visit to the end cave is decided on, but this time the huge cavern produces scarcely anything but starlings. They are there in thousands; nor is it easy to pick out a pigeon or two without firing into the brown of them.

It is now getting dusk; the cliffs throw enormous shadows far out to sea; close under them it is dark enough to make each shot a fiery glare. There are again a few pigeons in the big cave, but they are cunning and get away untouched; so to save

the little remaining daylight we pull back across the bay to our opening scene at the great tunnel. On the way two of us give the oarsmen a spell, and work off a little of our own stiffness; then, as we reach the further side, places are once more taken, guns reloaded, and we are ready for the encounter. We pull to a small cave, empty before, but now packed with pigeons. It is a shallow hole, and no thumping is needed to induce the birds to 'face the music.' They are all on the wing at once, and leave four behind as a sample.

On to the tunnel quietly—'don't shoot at a passing bird'—and we take up our position so that nearly all the pigeons coming out must fly between us and a sheer curtain of cliff—a real running the gauntlet.

If there were none before there are plenty now. Just one thump, and far away we hear the rush of wings sounding nearer and nearer. Out they pour like enraged bees from a hive. Six barrels ring out, some birds fall; load again. 'The cry is, still they come.' Many have doubtless escaped by flying up the shaft; anyhow, we can count eight down, and one more is shot just before we reach our starting-place. This one, the last shot of all, falls on the top of the crags. A tiny path winds up the steep sides of the cove, and we agree to climb up, pitch the bird down, and walk home, leaving our crew to sail back more leisurely.

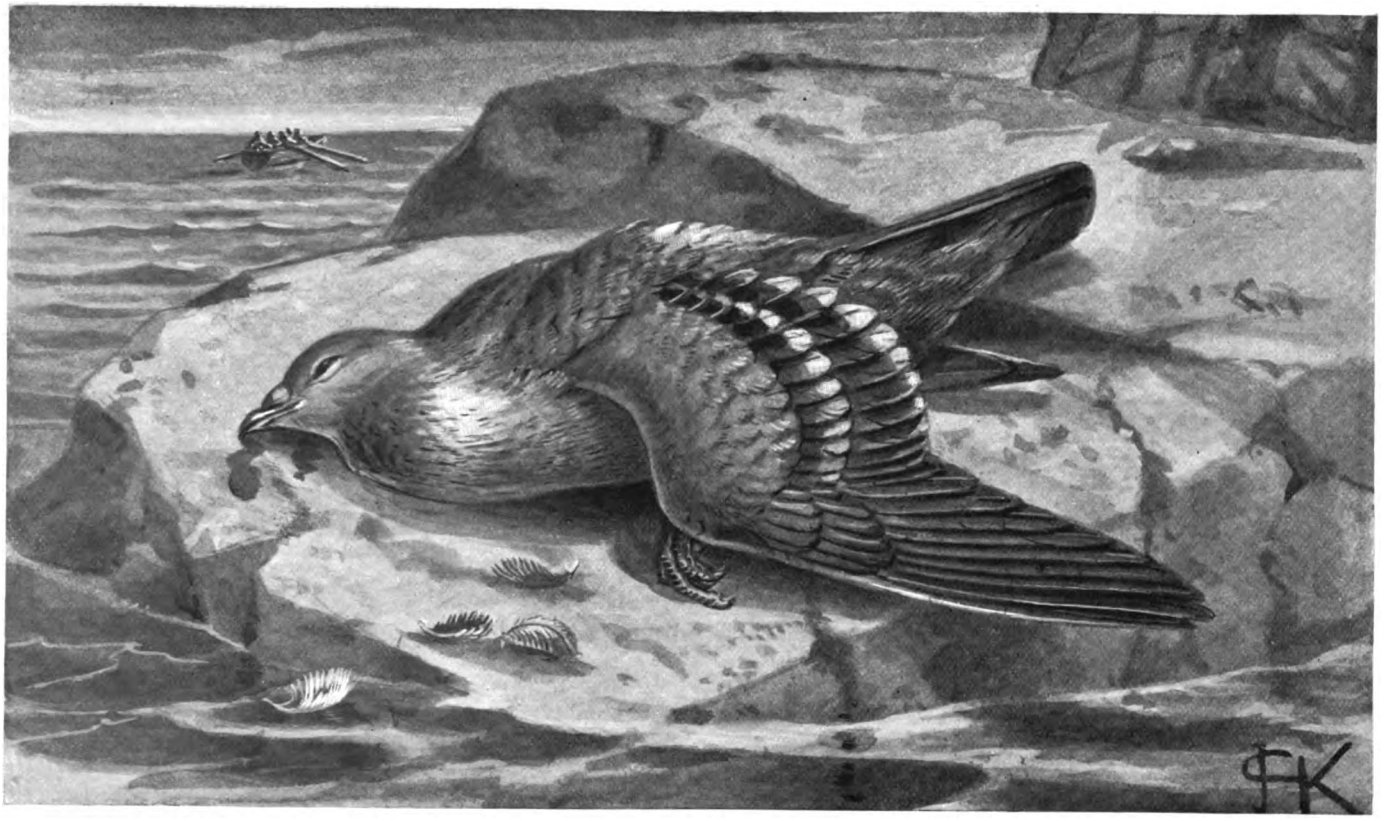
The top reached, we shout, 'Look out below!' 'Aye, aye.' 'What's the bag?' We have just light enough to see the pile of blue-rocks thrown aft and counted. 'Sixty-four.' 'Well done!' And away we walk after a real good afternoon's sport, one not easily to be forgotten, even among many others, where perhaps the bag was bigger; but then, they were not blue-rock pigeons.

I will wind up with a little advice and general information.

Pigeon-shooting from a boat is not the sport for a novice with the gun. It is not always as calm as it was on the day I have described. Of course the cliffs are impracticable on anything but a reasonably calm day; still, there is often a slight swell, which makes it almost impossible to stand, and positively dangerous to pick up a bird close under the cliffs.

You must keep perfectly cool: an excitable man in a small boat, with a slight rolling motion and pigeons flying in all directions, is apt to be dangerous to his crew and companions.

You may also, on the spur of the moment, run into other dangers. More than once I have climbed a narrow ledge to get a dead bird, and found after pitching it down that climbing back was a matter of extreme difficulty. You can not remember the



Ex Post Facto

exact way you got up, the rocks are wet and slippery, and the men shouting directions from the boat only serve to increase your confusion. However, you do it somehow, and probably the very next time you are out you do it again. Once I had a very narrow escape. A pigeon I had winged flapped its way on the water into a cave which I knew to be of considerable depth and size. There were only my man and I in a very light, small boat. 'Pull, James,' I said, 'we're bound to have that bird.' So we poled into the cave, and as we pushed the pigeon flapped further and further. What with the struggles of the bird and the semi-darkness of the cavern, we were several minutes inside when, reminded perhaps by a bigger swell than usual driving our boat against the side of the cave, James remarked, 'We had just better get oot o' this; there was no muckle room to get in, and the tide's rising gey an' fast. I doot we'll no win oot.'

Looking back, the entrance was certainly smaller. A second entrance was already too small for us, so we made for the way we came, only to find that it was just too narrow for the beam of the boat. The opening, wide enough for a barge at low water, narrowed rapidly, and we knew that at high spring tides the entrance was completely blocked.

Not to dwell too long on the horrors of the situation, we managed by getting right in the bows to force the boat's head down almost to the water's edge, and so, pushing against the top and sides of the cave, and waiting for the dip after a swell, we shoved her out into daylight and open water again. We did bag the pigeon, but I have never been in that cave since.

Another time it came on to blow very suddenly from the south-east, right on shore. We made off as quickly as possible, but we had a very bad time with a rising gale and sea before we rounded the rocky point and got into smooth water once more.

Luckily for the pigeons there are not many days in the shooting season that you can take a boat to the cliffs. Sometimes August and September will go by without a day fit to shoot pigeons, except Sundays, which, by some odd freak, are often the only calm days in the week.

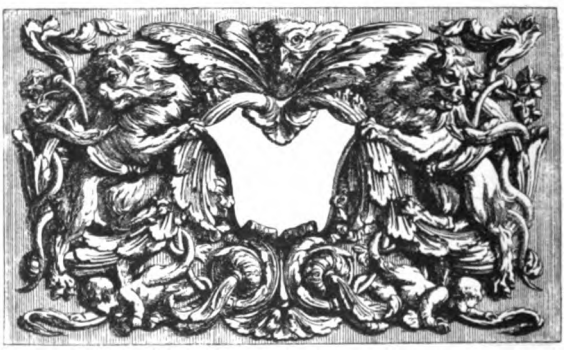
On the other hand, I have shot the cliffs two days consecutively at Christmas and had splendid sport, beginning to shoot at noon or earlier. Too much shooting soon scares the pigeons: they get wild, and instead of flying from cave to cave, they sit on top of the cliffs, or go away altogether. In a prolonged frost they suffer severely: their soft bills cannot pick up seeds from the ironbound fields, they are easily shot on the stubbles, and are too weak and

poor to fly fast or far; but with a favourable spring they soon bring up their numbers again, the caves are crowded, and gunners have a good time.

At harvest-time their crops are full of grain. A very short time in the nearest fields, and they are off home to digest; but before the oats are cut they must be longer away and feed on any seeds they can find.

Twenty-five to thirty blue-rocks is a good bag for a single gun, and he is a good shot who fires no more than fifty or sixty cartridges to secure it. We once got seventy-one with four guns in two boats, the only time I ever had so large a party.

It is quite possible that some readers of this paper may wish to know where this paradise of pigeons is, but I must ask to be excused from giving details, as indeed there are too many people who know that already. You cannot prevent anyone shooting from a boat, and although the whole range of cliffs may be your own property, you are at the mercy of any yachtsman or tourist who may chance to discover where such grand and such cheap shooting may be had.



CHINESE GAMES AND SPORTS

BY E. H. PARKER (LATE CONSUL)

THE Chinese are essentially a sedentary people, and little given to outdoor sports. Cricket, hockey, golf, football, baseball, tennis—all these are totally unknown to them, nor have they anything at all corresponding thereto. Horse-racing, archery, weight-lifting, putting the stone, and fencing are rather military exercises than sports; and even then it is more the ruling caste of Tartars than the Chinese proper who indulge in such pastimes. However, self-contained and sedate though the yellow man may be, he is not totally destitute of a desire for amusements, whether indoor or outdoor, and accordingly in this paper I propose to give some account of them, beginning first with those concerning the animal kingdom.

Quail-fights are in vogue both in the north and south of China, and it is by no means uncommon in Peking to see a man walking about in the country lanes with his favourite bird in a cage. He takes it out, feeds it, and plays with it just as the Spaniards do with their fighting cocks, 'nourishing' its hate and ferocity, wherever opportunity may occur, by confronting it with a rival of its own kind. In Canton quail-fights are usually held in gambling booths or mat sheds, (called *lip* or *liak*, according to dialect), and betting goes on very freely.

Cricket-fights are also common, alike in Peking, in the Great River Valley, and in the south. In Peking the crickets are invariably kept in a sort of covered jar made of a porous earthenware, which we Europeans used to find most excellently adapted for keeping tobacco in. When once the insects close, they rarely separate until one or the other is left dead on the field.

Cock-fighting is a very ancient sport, but at present it seems to have gone somewhat out of vogue. At Shanghai the Manila

seamen, of whom there are always great numbers in port, invariably amuse themselves on a Sunday with an afternoon of cock-fighting. It is either ignored or connived at by the foreign municipality. The arrangements, though on a humbler scale, differ in no way from those of the regular arenas in Madrid, Mexico, or Havana. The spurs are small razors of the most deadly description, and the movements of the birds are so rapid that one of the two often falls dead from a blow clean through its head without the inexperienced spectator being able to see more than a flutter of feathers and an instantaneous rush on both sides. Nearly 1,200 years ago the Emperor who is popularly supposed to have 'invented' small feet for women also distinguished himself, like our James I., by his cock-fighting propensities. He used to give public entertainments in the spring of each year at the ancestor-worshipping festival; and, in order to keep an adequate supply of game-cocks, he established a sort of mews in the neighbourhood of his own palace. Here 500 boys were steadily employed in training and feeding 1,000 cocks. But even in Confucius's time, 1,200 years before this again, there is mention of metal spurs used in cock-fighting; and all through Chinese history there are fragments of literature quoted in which the poets sing the glories of successful cocks. The Emperor who reigned from B.C. 32 to B.C. 8 used to go out *incognito*, disguised as the servant of one of his male favourites, in order the more freely to gratify his love for cock-fighting and horse-racing sports.

Camel-fights and ram-fights are mentioned by the Chinese as having been in vogue amongst the Tartars. Over a thousand years ago the people of Kutcha (on the road from Turfan to Kashgar) were said to inaugurate ram-fights and camel-fights during the week's holidays at the new year, and to judge the prospects of harvest by the results. Schuyler, in his book on Turkestan, also describes ram-fighting as being a favourite Usbek amusement. Long before Kutcha achieved a high place in Central Asian civilisation, the Khan of the Hiung-nu (ancestors of the Turks) is described as enjoying the annual sports of horse-racing and camel-fighting at his nomad capital or chief camp. These fights, therefore, would appear to be essentially Turkish.

There are horse races and cart races every year a few miles to the west of Peking, chiefly in connection with the annual drill of the Manchu troops; but there is very little true sport about them.

The Chinese are very clever at making their nags 'run' (as distinct from trotting and galloping). An even runner will fetch

twice as much as a mere galloper. Trotting is not an admired movement. Peking mules are both bigger and stronger than horses, and cost as much again. No one seems to know where they come from.

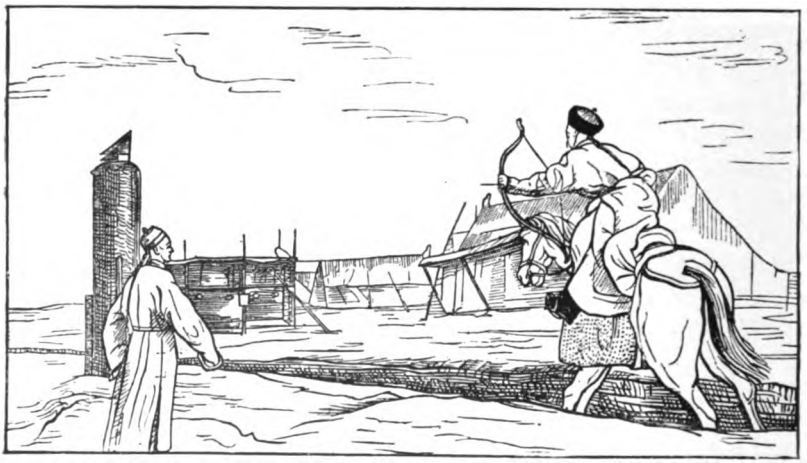
Hawking was wont to be a great amusement in the extreme north of China, and Marco Polo gives very graphic accounts of the sport he witnessed in the days of Kublai Khan. Tribute of hawks used to be exacted from the tribes about Manchuria, and well-trained birds were very valuable indeed. Even now it is no uncommon thing in and around Peking to meet men in the streets with a hawk upon the wrist, sometimes wearing a hood; but very little practical use seems to be made of them now. I have made three journeys of a month each in the northern parts of Chih Li, bordering upon Mongolia and Manchuria, but I have never once seen a cast. The Chinese pretend that the hawks recognise a 'king' or leader, and that, when a quarry is run down, the birds are trained to keep back until the king has first pecked out the eyes as a *bonne bouche*. It may be mentioned as a singular circumstance that in Canton the paper kite (*chi-yiu*) is literally so called after the kite itself (*yiu*), known in Peking as *yao-tsz*.

Fish-spearing through the ice is an old Manchu sport; but the Manchus themselves are almost obsolete now, not to speak of their ancient customs.

Sedentary amusements are more to the taste of the Chinese than outdoor sports, and the various forms of gambling are, of course, the most popular of the former. Their playing-cards are about the same length as ours, but only half the breadth, besides being much limper. There is reason to believe that they must be at least as old as our era; but, up to the present, no one seems to have made a serious study of Chinese card games. The most popular ones appear to be a kind of 'beggar-my-neighbour' and 'draw-poker,' and women play more than men.

Chinese chess has been carefully studied by several Europeans, notably Mr. Hollingworth (1866), Mr. Himly (1869), and Signor Volpicelli (1889). It is still a question whether China or India was the country which gave birth to the game, but it is quite certain that it was known to the Chinese at least before the first century of our era, if not much earlier. The Chinese chess-board, like ours, has sixty-four squares, with the addition of a 'river,' which practically means eight squares more. However, the men are not placed in the centre of the squares, as with us, but on the intersecting points; and they move along the lines. The Chinese stalemate counts as a win instead of a draw; and some of the

pieces, besides skipping, are placed differently from ours. Otherwise there is great similarity between the two games. Amongst Europeans it is common to give the vague name of 'chess' not only to the 'elephant chess,' which so closely resembles ours, but to the 'surrounding chess,' or a kind of draughts—the Japanese *gobang*, or, simply, *go*. There is reason to believe that *go* is merely a corrupted form of the Chinese word *ki*, or *ch'i*, which the Annamese pronounce *kö*. The Chinese *kipan*, or 'chess tray,' is, therefore, exactly the Japanese *goban*. Amongst both Chinese and Japanese the latter game is considered superior to elephant chess, and even the greatest statesmen are proud of acquiring a proficiency in it; for instance, the father of the Marquess Tsêng,



HORSE ARCHERY

when viceroy at Nanking, was considered one of the most formidable checker players in China. The Chinese regard it in much the same light as the Germans do *Kriegspiel*, i.e. as a useful exercise in wit and strategy.

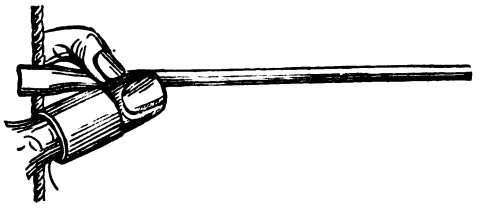
Dice seem to have been known to the Chinese as far back as history goes. They are not shaken, as with us, in a box, and then thrown out; the custom is to grasp them in the hand, and then flick them sharply into a common rice bowl. There are three different games: one played with six, one with three, and a third with two dice. These games were explained in great detail by Mr. Jordan in the 'China Review' for 1880. In buying cakes, sweetmeats, &c., in the public streets, it is quite a usual thing for the purchaser to '[illegible] double or quits' with the itinerant

hawker, who keeps a dice bowl temptingly handy for his clients' use. I have not heard that the secret of loading dice is understood; but I suspect it is, for anything a Chinaman does not know in the cheating line is not worth knowing.

PREPARING TO SHOOT AFTER THE SHOT

FOOT ARCHERY

Fantan, or 'turn-over,' is the most popular gambling amusement, and almost everyone who has visited China will be familiar with it, as seen in Macao, where, under government protection, it brings in a considerable revenue. After two or three years of



THE WAY THE ARROW IS FIXED AND HELD, SHOWING THE JADE THUMB-RING

flourishing, the Hong Kong government has at last succeeded in inducing the Chinese authorities to close the *fantan* shops at Cowloon opposite. The banker, in view of all, grabs a handful of copper cash or paste counters, and claps a common rice bowl over

them until the bets are made. Then with a chopstick or rod he separates four counters, at a time from the mass, until only one, two, three, or four (i.e. none) remain. There are thus four bets, and it is not unusual for a half-starved-looking Chinaman to put ten dollars on at a time. Many Europeans drop considerable sums, for the game soon becomes exceedingly fascinating, and of course each inveterate gambler has a 'theory' which he works out (invariably at a loss to himself) by taking down notes. In this game the banker seems to have no advantage whatever, unless it be that the odds are laid in such a way as to give him an extra chance. I forget how much is paid on each win.

Hwa-hwei is another form of gambling very popular in the southern provinces, especially in Foochow. Out of thirty-six placarded names each spectator mentally selects one, and makes his bet on it; meanwhile the banker has taken a slip of paper with one of the thirty-six names upon it, and has hung it up in a bag before the eyes of all. The successful guesser gets thirty times his stake. Here of course there is an advantage of one-sixth in favour of the banker. The bag is opened by the player who has staked the largest sum.

There is another Cantonese game called *Pak-kop-piu*, or 'white pigeon tally,' which gives a great deal of trouble to the authorities; denunciatory proclamations appear from time to time. I have never ascertained exactly why it is so called, but it consists in each player choosing ten names, from twenty selected each turn by the banker out of a stock of eighty. Each ticket costs a farthing, and when all have taken tickets, the banker writes, in view of all, any ten names he chooses out of the twenty originally selected. No one wins anything unless five of his names appear, when the stake and a third more is paid back; if six are alike, he gets sixteen times his stake; if seven, 160 times; if eight, two taels and a half; if nine, five taels; if all ten, ten taels.

The celebrated *waising* lottery is now in full swing at Canton. It is a bet upon the name or names of the successful candidates in the examinations for degrees, and has also been explained at length in the foreign press of China. In 1874 the Peking Government made a *bona fide* effort to put a stop to this lottery, which causes incalculable damage in the Canton provinces; they even went so far as to degrade the new Manchu Viceroy, Yinghan, who was accused by the Chinese governor and the Manchu general of disobeying the imperial order. But unfortunately the only result of this admirable policy was to throw the profits into the coffers of the neighbouring Portuguese colony of

Macao, without in any way putting a stop to the gambling evil. In the end the central Government, in its own interests, was obliged to lend official sanction to the lottery once more, and now the right to sell tickets is officially farmed out to the highest bidder; the contractors last year paid in advance 1,600,000 taels for six years, which, even at present low rates of exchange, means 150*l.* a day; but, as silver is just as valuable in China as ever, 300*l.* a day is nearer the effective mark; that is, 3,000 tickets

RAISING THE KNIFE (WEIGHT, 120 POUNDS)

a day, at a dollar each, must be sold before any question of making a profit or even of defraying expenses comes in.

. . . . . .

Of innocent family or social amusements there are not a few. The most common and popular is perhaps shuttlecock, which, unlike our game, is not played with a battledore, but with the insteps, sides, soles, and heels of the feet. The hands may not be used at all, but the elbows, knees, hips, and shoulders may. Many of our readers may have seen the perform-

ances of the Burmese athletes who have recently been exhibiting in Paris and elsewhere; in this case the shuttlecock was replaced by balls and globes, but the principle is the same. The game does not appear to be a very old one; perhaps it dates back 500 years or more. A group of young men stand round in a circle, and, keeping their eye steadily fixed upon the movements of the shuttlecock, endeavour by kicking it up with their feet or knees to keep it from falling to the ground. I have seen the same game played in Siam, Japan, and Burma, from the last-named of which States it may possibly have come. The Burmese play it best.

The common swing is mentioned at least 2,000 years ago, and seems to have been derived from the Tibetans and Tartars; at all events it is said to be a northern amusement.

It is a curious fact that balancing on the tight and loose rope is almost invariably done by women, and, strange to say, by women with deformed feet. In general conjuring the Chinese are not to be excelled, even by the Hindoos.

'Punch and Judy' is occasionally met with, but I have never seen it south of the Great River. In the province of Sz. Ch'wan I once came across some marionettes. The performers stood behind a large sheet lit up on their side, and the audience sat in the dark in front of the sheet. The figures were of painted wood or cardboard, transparent enough to show the colours through the light, and the men dangled them about with sticks and strings. Very likely this amusement was also derived from Burma, for I once saw some very excellent marionettes of the same kind in Tenasserim. As early as B.C. 1000 an ingenious Chinaman is recorded to have made 'wooden men that could sing and dance,' and history states that 'these were the first beginnings of marionettes.' Another account says, however, that they, with the manipulators, were introduced into China by an obsequious courtier so late as A.D. 633, but his only reward was punishment for bringing such 'uselessly ingenious individuals' into the palace. In the south of China the marionettes are dangled from above by strings, somewhat after the Burmese style. In Hankow marionettes seem to merge into 'Punch and Judy.' Of course the Chinese 'Punch and Judy,' though often exactly the same as ours in principle, differs somewhat in detail, the character of Mr. Punch being totally unknown to the Celestials.

'Blind man's buff' is known all over China, and differs in no way from ours. The name is the same, *i.e.* 'blind man feeling.'

'Cat's cradle' is played both in Peking and Canton, and of

course does not offer much scope for novelty. The Chinese call it 'picking involved thread.'

Paper kites are said to have originated about 1,500 years ago. The Emperor was desirous of conveying messages from a beleaguered city to his friends beyond the enemy's lines, and, in order to do this unobserved, he fashioned a number of false kites attached to strings, and packed with despatches. I have myself seen paper or silk kites flying so like a real bird that I called for a gun in order to take a 'pot shot' at one, which persisted in soaring just in front of my window. There is a legend that a thousand years earlier than this a Chinese philosopher fashioned a 'wooden kite,' presumably out of shavings; paper had not then been invented. But, as this kite collapsed after one day's flying, not much importance need be attached to the tradition. In some parts of China Æolian harps are attached to kites, and hence in Peking the kite is, by a sort of synecdoche, styled 'an Æolian harp.' In that city it is also the practice to attach harps and whistles to the legs and wings of pigeons, the result being a very weird, melancholy, and even touching series of howls in the air, which very much puzzle the new arrival. It is quite true that old men as well as young boys may be seen flying kites at the proper season (autumn) in China, and the Chinese are undoubtedly far ahead of all other nations in this matter. Some of the kites are enormous as well as artistic productions, and resemble flying dragons, tigers, cranes, and gigantic bats, all of a most life-like character. Some are lit up, or carry lamps. Kite-fighting consists in so manœuvring that the string of one kite is sharply dropped or hitched up so as to cut the other as nearly as possible at right angles. On one occasion I held, for a few moments, a large kite which appeared to be about a mile away; besides cutting my hand, the monster nearly carried me off my feet. The various rattles, whistles, and other musical devices forming part of the kites' tails are often worth a special study; but the tail is by no means a necessary appendage to a Chinese kite, which may be of all shapes, and flies equally well with or without a tail. Kites thirty or forty feet in length and breadth are occasionally seen, and these of course require a powerful 'anchor,' human or other.

400-POUND STONE

Whipping-tops are common all over the north. I have only seen pegtops in the south,—at Canton, where they are called *ninglok*, and in the island of Hainan. The *ch'eme*, or teetotum,

is used chiefly for gambling purposes by itinerant 'sweet' sellers, &c.

The Italian game of *mora*, or finger-guessing, is invariably played all over China after festive dinners, and the loser has on each occasion to toss off another cup of wine. The ancient Egyptians knew this game, and for the matter of that they knew of the game of draughts too; but that is no good reason for assuming that the Chinese derived any of their notions from Egypt.

RAISING THE STONE

The Chinese do not show up very well in athletic sports; such Olympian games as they have are either of a military nature or are derived from the Tartars. Mention is made about 1,200 years ago of the 'tug-of-war,' exactly as played by ourselves, except that, instead of all pulling the main rope, the adversaries each of them clung to a smaller cord attached to the chief cable. The 'Red-cap Mahomedans' of Peking (a banner or military colony brought from Turkestan over a century ago) have an annual gathering in the West Ch'ang-an Street, where pole climbing, song singing, and miscellaneous athletic sports are the order of the day. No Chinaman has any idea of boxing, and any Englishman can at once floor a Celestial by a single well-delivered blow in the chest. It is of no use to give a Chinaman 'one in the mug,' for his head is as hard as iron. As with all Orientals, a Chinese has a singularly weak spleen, and it is dangerous to hit him in that region. Chinese military athletics have been amusingly caricatured, or rather correctly described, by the witty Abbé Huc. There is really little or no exaggeration about his description. I once arranged for a party of British blue-jackets to meet in a festive way an equal number of Chinese 'braves;' the blue-jackets were to exhibit their usual cutlass, singlestick, and other exercises, while the Chinamen in turn were to go

through their pirouetting, spear-thrusting, &c. Anything more ludicrous I never witnessed, but at least it must be confessed that such capers must conduce to bodily activity. The Chinese seem to think that it pays best by fierce yells, rollings of the eyes, hissing, spitting, and brandishing of arms to frighten the enemy from coming on at all, rather than to beat him methodically back when he is actually there. They also seem to forget that force must be economised if a man is to have any stay in him, and that every caper, every gnashing of the teeth, every howl, means so much strength dissipated. With bare fists, half a dozen blue-jackets would 'knock spots' out of a hundred of the best Chinese 'braves;' but it must not be forgotten (in case they ever try it) that the Chinese, like the Frenchmen, know how to kick too; and besides, they are apt to hit under the belt, gouge out the eyes, and generally fight as foul as possible.

The chief military exercises, largely introduced by the Manchus, are horse-archery, foot-archery, practice with the halberd, lifting the stone, and raising a sort of exaggerated dumb-bell, consisting of two small stone wheels upon a long wooden axle. Horse-archery consists in galloping along a straight sunken course for 300 yards, and shooting at four targets as the horse passes them. The bow is officially placed at twelve 'forces' of 13⅓ English pounds each,—i.e. a total force of 160 pounds is required to tighten it into condition for shooting the arrow. But this is only at the grand examination before the Emperor; at the earlier examinations the horse bow is only of three, and the foot bow of five, 'forces' or powers. The halberd weighs from 80 to 120 pounds, and is twirled over the head and shoulders with great address and activity. The stone weighs from 200 to 300 pounds, and has

CHINESE DUMB-BELL

two 'ears,' or sunken hand holes in the sides whereby to lift it; the operator has to raise it up to his knee. The 'dumb-bell' is raised very much as ours is, but the chief exercise consists in holding the arm upright and allowing the instrument to pivot rapidly round as the hand grasps it in this position. Spear-thrusting requires little explanation; Chinese spears are often

twenty or thirty feet long, and usually carry a triangular flag at the upper end.

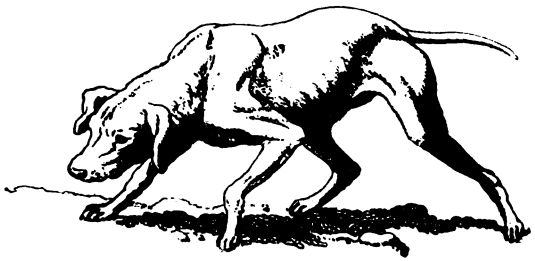
Wrestling is not unknown amongst the pure Chinese, but the Mongols are its chief patrons; those who come to Peking annually on official missions are bound by law to perform before the Emperor. When I was at Peking, some of us occasionally tackled the stray Mongols we met in the street, but we found them our matches. The Japanese carry wrestling to the pitch of a fine art; nevertheless, Archdeacon Gray, of Canton, about twenty-five years ago, took off his coat to one of their professionals, and soon made him bite the dust; the gallant and venerable Archdeacon in question had picked up a notion or two in Cumberland. The Chinese have a word for 'boxing,' but there is no more fancy art in it than there is in the street scrimmages of Liverpool rubbing-stone women. Chinamen fall like chaff before the British fist.

As marksmen with the gun, the northern Chinamen are not by any means to be sneezed at. I have often met tiger hunters on the frontiers of Manchuria, and with a few native curs and an old rusty gun they seem quite able to bag a first-class Bengal animal. Duck and goose shooting is rather amusing. A swivel-gun is fixed to the bow of a boat, and the craft is then steered in the direction of the birds; when the right direction is secured, one man lets fly at a flock, and certainly manages to hit a good many of his birds in this way. Still, the Chinaman envies the facility with which the European brings his single game down on the wing; as a rule he likes pot-shots on the ground. There is no such a thing as poaching in China; any man can go on any other man's ground, and shoot what he likes at all times. The imperial hunting-ground is no exception when once you are in it. Most game is secured by trapping, and in the winter-time you can get bustards, pheasants, deer, boar, &c. &c., almost for nothing. On the Mongolian steppes we used to 'hunt' the *hwang-yang* ('yellow goat,' or *Antelope gutturosa*); but, though we saw thousands of them, we never got near them, not even near enough to shoot at them. The Manchus used, until a century ago, to hunt big game by beating up fifty or sixty miles of country in a circle of soldiers, until a regular menagerie of tigers, wolves, camels, deer, boars, &c. were forced into the centre, when a battue took place; but the last four Emperors have given up this sport. The Emperor K'ang-hi was a fine old sportsman. It was he who put a stop to the hawk-tribute in 1682, because it involved so much hardship. The following literal translation of a letter

to his Mongol grandmother at Peking, will give a notion of his fishing and culinary skill. He wrote from the Sungari River:

'Your subject had a very delightful journey from the Shan-hai Pass to the city of Mukden. The beasts were as numerous as the fish were lively, and each time I ate of them I thought what a pity it was I could not hasten to lay a dish before my sacred grandmother, the Double Dowager. After reaching Mukden, I cast the nets myself, and caught some roach and perch, which I managed to cook. I dosed one course with mutton fat, and pickled the other for you. I now send it by express with my best love, and shall feel amply rewarded if you find it toothsome. Also some wild chestnuts which fell during our picnic; some wild walnuts; and some persimmon cake submitted by the Coreans.'

Note.—'The illustrations are taken from a work upon the military examination published by the Chinese Jesuit, Father Zi.'



CYCLING IN TRAFFIC

BY MARGARET ORDE

It seems inevitable that war should continue to rage between driver and cyclist, for the best of reasons no doubt—namely, that neither stops to consider the matter from the other's point of view. A friend of mine who drives four-in-hand tells me with glee of the cyclists whom he has purposely driven up the hedge, leaving the victims, with punctured tyres and many bruises, vociferating vigorously against the unkindly coachman. Probably with justice too, in spite of the fact that he had 'sneaked up on the wrong side,' as the driver of horses invariably puts it.

I, in my turn, gloat over the recollection of one fine day when a cart blocked my way for some distance in a narrow lane, the driver and other occupants amusing themselves the while with the usual jeers and would-be witticisms which seem to be the privilege of anyone who has not the good fortune to possess a bicycle. I waited my opportunity and passed the cart by riding on the grass for a few yards, spun quickly ahead, and alighting quietly when round the next corner proceeded to pump out the tyre of my back wheel in the middle of the road. When the cart came up it could not pass, and I calmly kept it waiting until I had inflated the tyre to my satisfaction. No doubt we are at war with each other, and pedestrians make a third source of disagreement; but of these I do not propose to treat.

There are many reasons why the tamest of cyclists find it safer to overtake and pass a slower vehicle on what is legally the wrong side. These reasons apply of course with additional force to the 'scorcher.' He *meets* nothing if vehicles keep on the left, whereas if he rides in the middle of the street in a large town he is in by no means an enviable position. If he overtakes anything on the right in dense traffic, he passes between two endless streams of conveyances. It is difficult, dangerous, sometimes impossible, to move as slowly as the traffic one is in the midst of. The space between the two opposing streams is not great, though generally

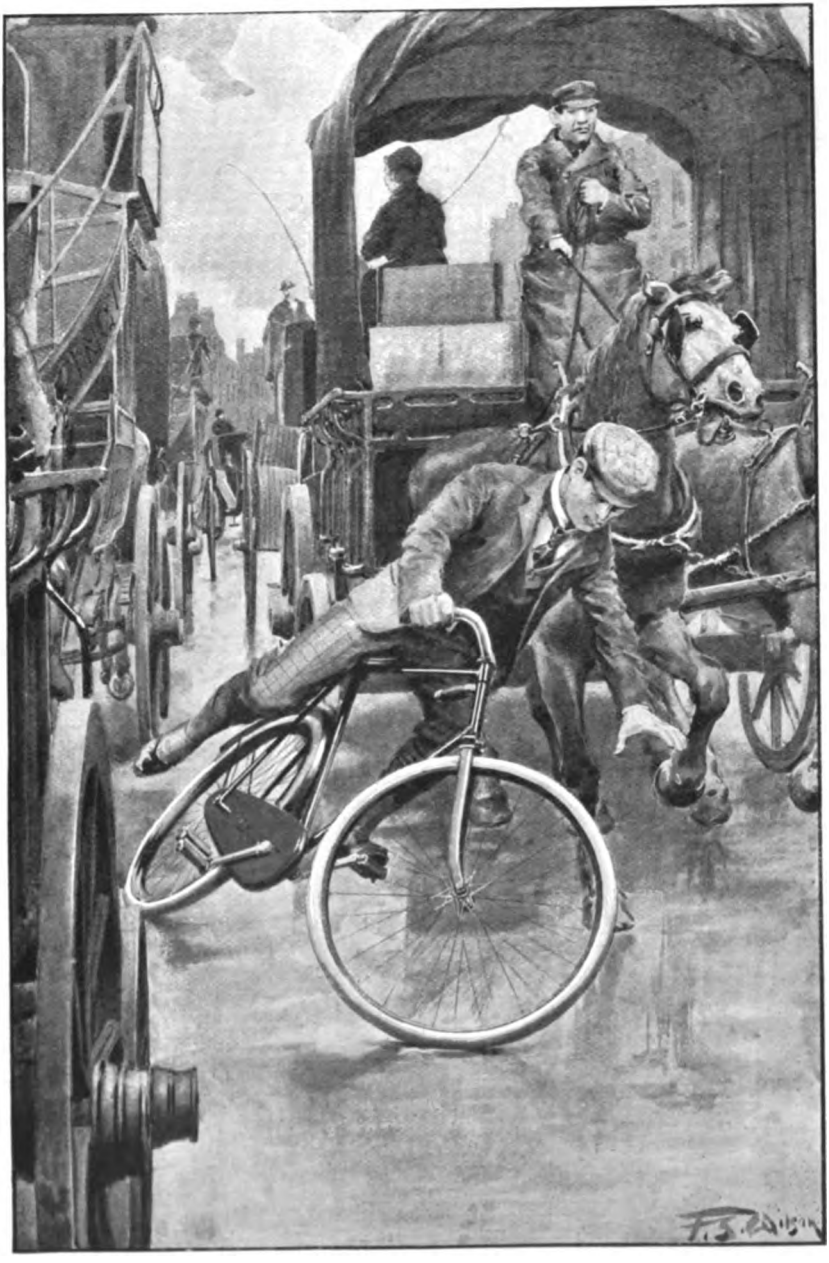
amply wide enough for a cyclist to pass. But supposing any slight accident occurs and he falls, danger surrounds him; he has no escape on either hand. If, again, he finds after passing a van or carriage of any size that he must instantly cross in front of the horses to resume his place on the extreme left, he runs the risk of a 'side slip' under their feet; that is, if the road happens to be at all wet—and it generally is, either from water-cart or rain. An accident resulting in this way inconveniences traffic considerably, alarms the horses, and endangers life. Even without an accident I am almost prepared to say that it startles a horse more to see a cycle whisk across his path in the manner described above, than it does if he passes quietly on the left.

I PROCEEDED TO PUMP OUT MY TYRE

Another difficulty is one which applies more in small towns than large, though it does apply to some extent in both. It is this. In overtaking a vehicle on the right the cyclist has often to remain behind it for some little distance before he can take his opportunity of passing. He sees his chance, makes a spurt,

and finds several carriages, which have been hidden from view by the one in front of him, coming full tilt towards him. He may or he may not have time to retire behind his protecting carriage. In the country town, where the streets are narrow, this is a constant source of danger. In a country road the cyclist may be as completely hidden when riding full speed down a hill as his fellow-cyclist who is laboriously climbing it behind an intervening wagon. The conscientious climber *may* obediently follow the rule of the road when he overtakes the load of hay which occupies the greater part of the road. Perhaps he is just too far on the right to draw back when a couple of bicycles, on their own left side of the road, mind you, come rushing by. They meet him full, and if there is not a serious collision they have not the rules of the road to thank. No one who has not ridden a bicycle in traffic has any idea of how little can be seen from behind a cab, a carriage, or any conveyance in fact. The head of the rider of a bicycle is not many inches higher from the ground than when he is on his own feet. Therefore the main body of a cart or carriage of any kind comes to about the level of his eye, or if the cart happens to be a low one, the occupants are seldom transparent enough to admit of a very clear view of anything in front of them. Thus it is not only vans and covered carts which make this difficulty. They have, no doubt, a decided disadvantage when compared with other vehicles, in that their drivers do not easily see on either side of them, and are not themselves visible when the expected sign should be given on turning, stopping, or crossing the line of traffic. I may say they never look to see what is coming, or even show a whip. They generally turn abruptly across the street or down a yard without giving any sign; then they are surprised, even a little hurt, if a cyclist is killed by running into them. It is thoughtless of the cyclist to get killed, I admit, but these accidents will happen.

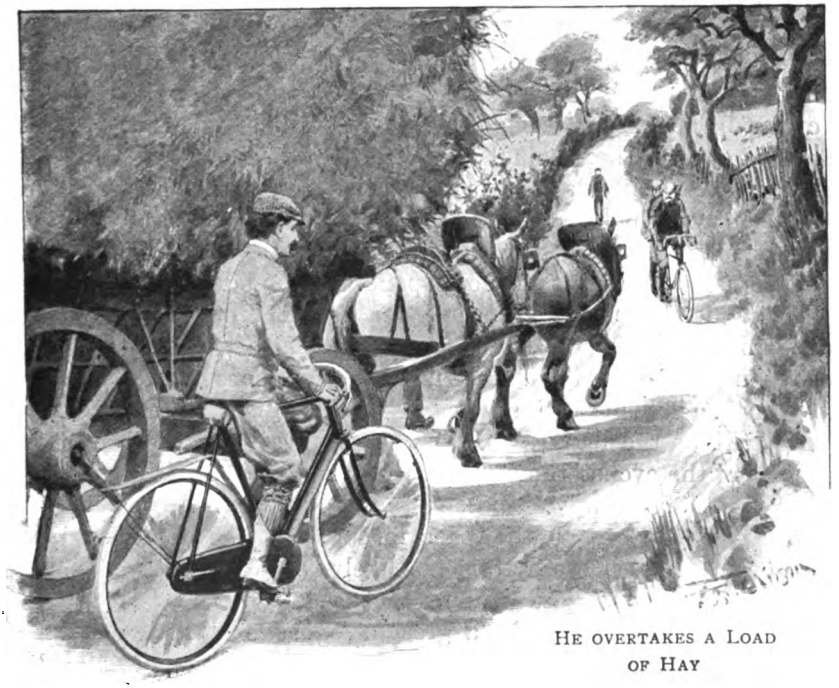
One great argument in favour of keeping to the left is that in the denser traffic of London a cyclist is never seen to do anything else. On one occasion I was riding to Liverpool Street Station about eleven o'clock in the morning. As I passed a policeman he called out to me, 'Keep on the left—never mind what pace you go!' Only twice had I to dismount in the slowly moving mass. All the drivers in such a throng expect a bicycle to hug the pavement, and hurl execrations without stint if one attempts to pass on the right. It is only when one rides in the wider streets—the Embankment or the like—that the cabby bethinks him of the rule of the road. He then seizes the opportunity to let fly temper, which has accumulated from many contrary circumstances, at



A Side Slip

the harmless cyclist. Here, however, I admit that the practice of violating the existing law is quite gratuitous, and generally is only a matter of laziness on the part of the cyclist, or possibly his habit of keeping a straight line may have something to do with it.

Again, drivers say it is impossible to look out on all sides when driving in crowded streets. Granting that this is a very just argument, let us consider how many cabbies, coachmen, or drivers of vans ever move an inch one way or the other to oblige a passing cycle. Rather do they regard it as a plague created principally for their annoyance. Some give grudgingly such



HE OVERTAKES A LOAD OF HAY

room as is enforced by law, if there happen to be witnesses. Others are civil enough—at least to ladies. I am almost inclined to say, 'Let us keep to our left side of the road at our own risk, and go our own way as they go theirs.'

The question is sometimes put, 'Why should there be special laws for cycles rather than for any other vehicle—hansom, coach, fire-engine?' The answer lies in a nut-shell. You are not trusting to another animal to propel your conveyance—it rests entirely with you. You have no horse to consider, and you go at a greater speed. There are special regulations for foot-paths. In public gardens, exhibitions, bridges, and elsewhere pedestrians

are requested to keep to the right, not to the left. On a river the rule of road has its own peculiarities. As things stand, the swifter, lighter vehicle is bound to travel fast at its own risk. The 'heavy and slow' hug the left, where safety lies, where they are out of the way of faster folk. Yet even they leave a space between them and the curb where a cyclist can pass without disturbing his pace or position. A horse very soon gets used to the cycles passing him from an unexpected quarter. He raises his head with a jerk once or twice, but even that hardly more than he does when the same thing occurs on the more accustomed side: certainly less than if a rider passes immediately in front of his nose in crossing the road to resume his place on the left.

One of the chief reasons for a cyclist's ruthless treatment of horses in traffic is his ignorance of the art of driving. If every cyclist had a fair knowledge of what a horse can do and of what he cannot do, there would be far fewer accidents and less bad feeling between driver and cyclist. Many accidents which apparently occur from vulgar rudeness, spite, or a desire to annoy on the part of the scorcher, are far more the result of ignorance than of temper. So, too, is the corresponding action on the part of the driver. He has no knowledge of what is dangerous to the cyclist. He thinks it is absurd if he declines to ride in greasy mud on a shelving piece of road. He has no experience of side slips—lucky man! Time will, of course, improve this state of things on the part of the driver, but there seems very little prospect of teaching the cyclist the ways of a horse. Therefore keep him as much out of the way as possible. It appears that cycle tracks are being made to all the roads in some parts of America, probably for this purpose. It is not likely that this will be done in England—we can hardly afford the space—yet a yard on each side of the road would be a great safeguard where it could be given without inconvenience. There foot-passengers would be unlikely to stray, and would not be so much aggrieved as they are at present if you ring your bell in passing, even if they are walking three abreast, arm-in-arm, backwards in the middle of the road. This is, of course, not quite a universal practice, but it is an actual experience.

I do not pretend to be impartial, as will be very apparent to any who may read the foregoing remarks. I cycle so much more than I drive that it would be absurd to affect such an unlikely condition of mind. I can only hope that what I have said will not be quite futile, as it will reach many who drive as well as many who cycle.

CLOSE SHAVES

BY COLONEL G. H. TREVOR, C.S.I.

THE scene was an Indian cantonment. After Mess, over the cigars, the conversation had turned on snakes, which, according to the reports of the Government of India, were responsible for more than 21,000 deaths in that country during the year 1894. District officers know that the police often include under the head 'Snake-bite' many casualties the causes of which their vigilance is unable to penetrate, and which for various reasons never come to light. For instance, among castes specially jealous of their women, it is more than suspected that some are secretly made away with, to reappear only in the local return of victims to snakes (not human). Still, allowing for all such cases, there can be no doubt that the true mortality from snakes is appalling, and will not diminish so long as the natives sleep on the floor or ground, walk bare-footed in the dark, and take no pains to keep at a distance from their houses, huts, and villages the vegetation which harbours these deadly enemies of mankind. For years Government has been giving a money reward for each snake killed, with the result in some places, it is said, of actually encouraging the breeding of the reptiles it is desired to exterminate. The difficulty of dealing with people who would rather not destroy death in any shape, whether it be from snakes or disease,

insanitation or anything else, if they can only manage to make a profit out of it, or if the remedy interferes with long-established custom, is one of those problems which only time and civilization can overcome.

We asked the Colonel, who had been many years in India, if he had ever heard of a European being bitten by and dying from the bite of a snake. He said he could only recall one case of death, when a young officer who had acquired the facility of a conjurer in handling snakes made a slip one day with a cobra and was dead in a few hours. 'I remember,' he added, 'hearing of a subaltern who awoke one night to feel a prick and cold slimy touch on one of his fingers as he lay with a hand hanging out of bed close to the floor and suddenly believed he had been bitten by a snake. He started up, struck a light, woke a brother sub in the next room, and persuaded him to hack off the finger in question—an operation effected by a knife with some difficulty. The doctor was then sent for, in due course the wound healed, the subaltern became a colonel, and is living still, I hope.'

'What was the evidence of snake-bite? Was the snake seen and recognised as deadly?'

'No, as far as I remember, that was the weak point. It generally is in such cases. Indeed, I did hear it suggested that the hand might have been touched by a frog and bitten by a mosquito, and that the loss of the finger was due to a too lively imagination. In another case I heard of, the man was so convinced he had been bitten by a cobra and there was no hope for him, that he sat down and wrote a long letter to his wife in England, taking leave of her and giving final directions. Waiting for the poison to work he passed several hours of acute mental disturbance, as you may imagine, and was astonished to find himself sitting down to dinner none the worse bodily. But I can tell you of one incident in which there was proof positive of a poisonous bite, though here again the snake escaped.

'Two young fellows were out shooting in the jungle. One of them, a regular griff, seeing a biggish snake going into a hole, thought it fun to grasp the end of its tail and pull the beast out suddenly with a jerk. Before the manœuvre was completed and the snake had been flung away, it managed somehow to bite the thumb of the flinger. The boys with great pluck slashed the wound, and cauterised it by applying gunpowder which was ignited. Then, tying up the thumb in a handkerchief, they rode several miles into cantonment and summoned the doctor. For some hours the injured man was kept moving up and down to

keep the blood circulating. Weighed down by the paralysing lethargy which snake-poison produces, he was plied with constant doses of brandy, and never allowed to sit down. When ready to drop he was supported: friendly voices, eyes, and hands did all they could to rally his energies, and never left him till early the next morning, when he had tided over the crisis, and had consumed two bottles of brandy. Ever after there was a curious twitch or tremor about his face, said to have been caused by the snake-poison acting on the nerves. He was a General when I knew him, and a charming accomplished man. That was a close shave, if you like. If the snake was a cobra, as stated, the venom must have been weakened somehow.'

'Talking of close shaves,' a youngster queried, 'you must have had more than one, sir, when out after tiger?'

Now tigers were a subject on which the Colonel was not to be drawn. He had been known to sit through a long dinner listening patiently in silence to the vapourings of a guest who, having recently taken part in two or three tiger expeditions, felt justified in imparting a few wrinkles on that species of shikar, and conceived at the end of his discourse that he had rather astonished the old man. His feelings may be imagined when he learned subsequently that the old man had killed more than a hundred tigers. 'Why the deuce didn't he let on that he knew all about it, instead of allowing me to make an ass of myself?' growled the discomfited novice. It was provoking, no doubt; the Colonel never would let on about a story in which he played the chief part. So now, as on other occasions, he turned the question.

'Close shaves! I can tell you of one which happened to a dog of mine who never could resist going into the water after a wounded duck. A small, thick-set bull-terrier, brindled, with a grim face, square jaw, broad white choker, looking out of the corners of his eyes sideways; he might have been a prize-fighter turned Methodist parson in some previous stage of existence, according to the Hindoo doctrine of metempsychosis. I called him Grimshaw in the days of my youth, and he used to go with me everywhere, and chase every mortal thing that ran before him. Never could teach him to fetch, carry, or retrieve a dead bird; he took no interest in anything without life. But let a bird run or swim with broken wing or leg he would hunt it almost as keenly as if it were a rat. One day I was shooting ducks on a small tank, and he was in the middle of it chasing one that was wounded, when suddenly to my horror a

big black head emerged, and in a moment the dog went down under an alligator. To my surprise he rose again almost as suddenly, barked and splashed furiously, and made for the bank as fast as he could. I was ready to give the alligator a dose of shot, but apparently, for some reason which passes comprehension, he did not want the dog, or was frightened, as he did not show again. Grimshaw's troubles were not quite over, as a few yards from the bank his paws got entangled in a soft clinging weed which held him like a fly in a spider's web, and I had to send a coolie into the water to release him. Then the coolie was caught by the weeds, but touched bottom, and extricated himself and the dog just as I began to think of going in myself to the rescue. The extraordinary thing was that Grimshaw bore no marks of the alligator's teeth: the brute was a small one, and though the dog was also small, his struggles and the stones we threw in to make a noise may have led the alligator to think he had got hold of a troublesome customer whom it was hardly worth while keeping. At any rate, this is the only theory I can invent to account for what I cannot at all explain. Never again did Master Grimshaw venture into a tank. He would go to the brink and bark violently when he saw an alligator, which he often did, but henceforth he did duty as a land-lubber only, and declined to serve as a marine. Alas! three years after he fell a victim to a panther. These animals love to lure dogs into the jungle by crouching low in the dark, and running away from them till they are out of reach of succour; or else a dog hears a rustling in long grass or undergrowth which keeps on retreating as he pursues without knowing what he is hunting. Suddenly the pursued turns, and a day or two afterwards someone brings in the skin of the pursuer. That was how poor old Grimshaw went under. I mourned him sincerely, and have never owned a dog since.'

'Yes; but, Colonel,' persisted the youngster who had spoken before, 'it's awfully good of you telling us about poor old Grimshaw, and it certainly was a close shave as regards the alligator, but haven't you yourself been in a tight place with a tiger?'

'Ah! if you want a story of that kind,' laughed the Colonel, as he lit a fresh cheroot, 'ask Major C—— to tell you of his cousin's adventure with the man-eater, who used to kill the dak-runners. That beats anything I can give you, and I've done my yarns for to-night.' There was nothing for it but to call on Major C——, who gave us the story of the man-eater, as follows:

'You all know that a man-eater is generally a tiger too old,

sick, or inactive to catch his natural prey in the jungles, so he hangs about a village like an area sneak, picks up goats and calves, one day falls on a helpless man, woman, or child at the edge of the forest, and having tasted human flesh, longs for more. Confirmed man-eaters, it is said, care for no other, but this I doubt; they may prefer it to any other; it is probably easier to get in many cases. But whether a tiger becomes a man-eater by force of circumstances or malice prepense, he is a terror to the neighbourhood he frequents, and, as he adds to the tale of his victims, helpless villagers invest him with supernatural attributes, and call on their gods to avert his wrath. A noted specimen of this class had killed a great number of people about a certain village somewhere in Kattyawar, and had taken to polishing off dak-runners as they passed through a narrow jungly defile, three or four miles from the village. He grew so cunning that shikaris were baffled time after time in their attempts to sight him. When an armed escort accompanied the dak-runner nothing happened; so after some days it was thought the tiger had shifted his quarters. Then the escort was dropped one evening, and immediately another unfortunate runner disappeared. A special reward was offered by Government, but without result. For months and months the man-eater continued to kill with impunity. My cousin in the Staff Corps, a keen shikari and very determined fellow, swore he would shoot that tiger; got ten days' leave, and pitched his tent near the village in question. He tried all he knew, tied up buffalo calves, beat the jungles with three or four hundred men, even accompanied a dak-runner at dusk through the fatal defile, but in vain. At last he resolved to personate the dak-runner himself and go alone. Attired as a native and armed with rifle and pistol, he slung a mail bag over his shoulder and started on his perilous adventure one evening at sunset. Jingling a number of little bells attached to his person, after the manner of dak-runners, he trotted on till he reached the place of evil omen. Then all at once with a bound the man-eater appeared in the middle of a road not twelve feet wide, facing him. The man pulled up short at a distance of some fifteen yards, raised his twelve-bore, and, by the mercy of God, dropped the tiger stone dead with a ball in the brain. A marvellous exhibition of nerve, wasn't it? When the villagers came to realise that their enemy was done for at last, there was a tremendous scene. The dead body was hoisted aloft on a hastily constructed litter, and escorted by a torchlight procession through and round the village, men and boys shouted and capered with delight, while women wept and chanted songs

in praise of the victor. Prayers were offered up, and libations of liquor poured out so freely that few of those who attended the man-eater's obsequies that night could have gone to bed sober. As for my cousin, you may be sure that his prayers and thanksgiving were not less earnest than those of his admirers—I might say worshippers—for they almost worshipped him.'

'A splendid fellow that cousin of yours, C——,' said one man, while others indulged in exclamations to the same effect. 'No wonder the villagers almost worshipped him. It was a regular case of St. George and the Dragon.'

'And yet,' observed the Colonel, 'we are still called a nation of shopkeepers, and certain Little Englander M.P.'s encourage Congress-wallahs to spread the notion that Englishmen in India are selfish beasts who love to oppress the natives.'

UNIVERSITY ROWING FIFTY YEARS AGO

BY THE REV. W. K. R. BEDFORD

THE histories of boating at Oxford and Cambridge, which are to be found in the works of Messrs. Brickwood, Knollys, MacMichael, and the volume on rowing in the Badminton series, are full of interest to the old University man, and hardly less to the lover of rowing wherever educated. But they of necessity take only a general and compendious view of the transactions to which they refer, and there is abundance of unwrought ground in the individual memories or traditions scattered up and down in memoirs, correspondence, or the recollection of contemporaries, now becoming fewer every day, which help to bring before the imagination the details of these archaic contests, and must materially assist in the comparison of excellence between the sturdy vigour of the pre-scientific oarsman and the finished performer in the sliding-seated outrigger of the present day. One who has studied the boating records of the earlier half of the century, and witnessed its close, has had an experience almost inconceivable to those who have only had the opportunities of *fin-de-siècle* observation.

The pioneer of boat racing in the University of Oxford seems to have been William Fitzgerald de Ros, of Christ Church, who, after taking his degree with honours, entered the army, and died in 1874 Lieut.-Governor of the Tower. He succeeded his brother in the barony of De Ros, and the interesting volume of Wellington reminiscences by his widow is widely known. De Ros established

a racing four-oar at Christ Church between 1815 and 1820, in which, though nominally a college crew, he availed himself on occasion of the services of out-college friends, thinking it probably better to borrow an Old Westminster from Oriel than to hire, as Brasenose did about the same period, a waterman to fill a place. Indeed, this laxity of selection outlasted even the beginning of Henley Regatta, for in one of the earlier years of the races there both Trinity and University Colleges were represented by 'mixed' crews, Brasenose apparently supplementing the former and Oriel the latter.

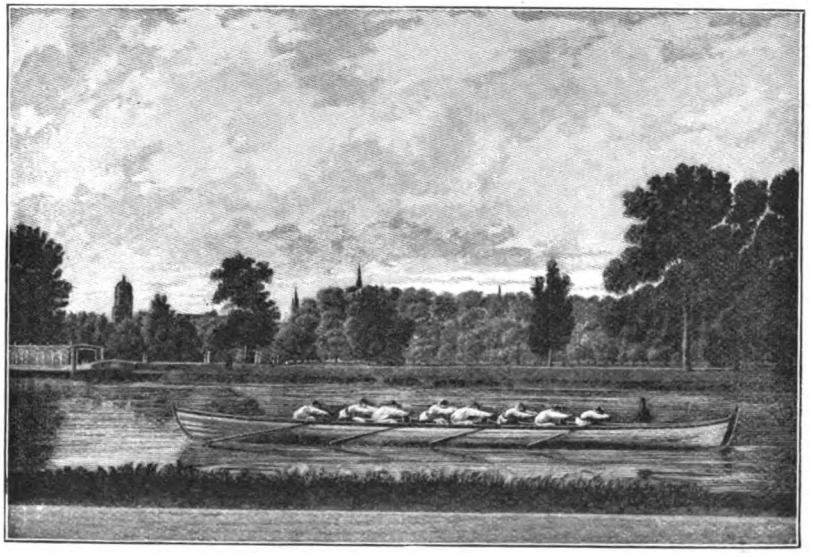
Still, irregular and rudimental as these races may have been, they paved the way for something more formal, and boats of eight oars soon replaced those of four or six, so that in 1826 the college races were established upon a basis of rules substantially the same as that upon which they now subsist. Among the captains of crews who signed these constitutions may be noticed Cyril Page, hero of an amusing episode in Bishop Charles Wordsworth's 'Annals of my Early Life' (p. 180), when the two Oxonians, with Lord Cantelupe as coxswain, essayed to propel a pair-oared boat against stream through the arch of the bridge over the Elbe at Dresden, but were beaten by the force of the current.

Atque illum in præceps prono rapit alveus amni.

I am not in a position to state what Cambridge had done in the way of aquatics before 1826, when an eight-oar belonging to St. John's was launched, as Mr. MacMichael tells us. In the following year, 1827, the record of regular races begins, the boats competing being a ten-oar and an eight-oar from Trinity, an eight-oar from St. John's, and three six-oars—Jesus, Caius, and Trinity (Westminster). The indifference as to size and number of oars in the competing boats is characteristic of the transition period through which aquatics were passing. One example of this is the race in 1819, when 'Mr. De Ros and three other Christ Church men went to Eton in their light four-oar, and challenged an Eton eight, but were well beaten.' Again, in 1820, a challenge for a race between Eton and Westminster schools was given and accepted; but while the Westminster water-ledger only gives six names, and states explicitly that 'the six that were to have rowed the Etonians rowed to Richmond and back in rather less than three hours and forty minutes,' the Eton list of their selected crew, as given by Mr. Blake Humfrey, contains ten names, and the inference seems clear that it was intended to row the race (which

was forbidden) with ten oars to six. It may be worth mention that the stroke of the Westminster crew was to have been William Gresley, subsequently well known as a theological author; while the Eton crew comprised the grandfather of the present Lord Clancarty, the first Lord Stanley of Alderley, and Mr. Heneage, who represented Grimsby for many years until his death in 1880.

Boat racing at Oxford became gradually more systematic between 1826 and 1836. In the earlier years of that decade the half-dozen boats that competed were placed in order in the lock at Iffley, with their oars shipped. At a signal the lock was opened, and the captain of the first boat, standing in the bows,



AN EARLY EIGHT

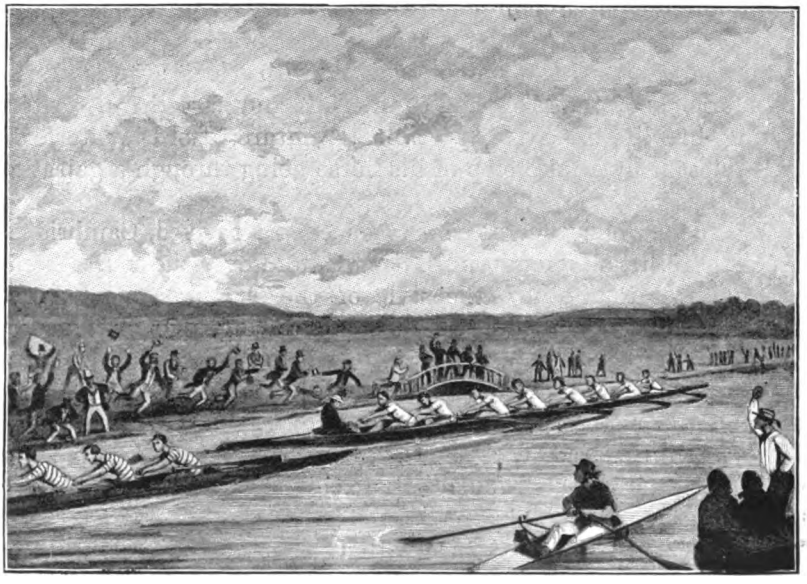
fended off the boat as he ran down the gang-board, and dropped into his seat in time to give the stroke as the boat emerged from the lock gates, to be pursued by the next boat as soon as it had completed the like process. In Gresley's work, the 'Portrait of a Churchman,' he makes a very picturesque use of the effect produced by the gradual increase in volume of sound, the measured plash of oars, and deepening chorus of vociferation, as boat after boat emerged into the race. In a few years, however, the number of competing boats had so much increased that the lock did not allow sufficient space for this manœuvre, and the present plan of starting-posts had to be devised.

For some years after the boat races were established at Oxford the balance of success was in favour of Christ Church, a college to which Etonians and Westminsters much resorted. They had a famous boat in 1825, in which the majority of the rowers were Scotsmen, who adopted as their headgear the national blue bonnet; and from this incident came a tradition which, certainly as late as 1845, invested the Christ Church crew with a cap of azure plush, shaped like a 'Tam-o'-Shanter,' the band being chequered red and white, like the undress cap of a guardsman. In 1825 Christ Church rowed head of the river (the author of 'Old and New London' is incorrect in saying 1827) with seven of the crew from Westminster. In 1828 she was head again, with Mr. Staniforth, an Etonian, the stroke in the first race between the Universities, as captain, with five Westminsters and two of his own school behind him. In 1832 or 1833 'the House' was head once more, the late Bishop Pelham, of Norwich, a Westminster man, being stroke with five schoolfellows and two Etonians behind him. Nor was it at Christ Church only that the old Elizabethan foundation was to the fore as a rowing school. It was an Old Westminster, Congreve, who took B.N.C. to the head of the Oxford river for the first time in 1827, and the stroke oars for Oxford against Cambridge in 1836, 1839, and 1840 were all Westminster men.

At the sister University, Third Trinity, when head of the Cam in 1834, was manned by an equal number from Eton and Westminster, the latter school claiming the preponderance by supplying the steersman. At other colleges the London rowing school had about this time some excellent representatives, such, for instance, as the late Sir Patrick Colquhoun, who had a very extraordinary experience when rowing in the races of 1835, No. 7 in the St. John's boat (Lady Margaret). An in-college feud caused a rival boat to be put on, with another Old Westminster, W. A. Mackinnon (M.P. for Lymington, 1857), as stroke, which bumped the first boat! Colquhoun was then made captain, and with Mackinnon's assistance took an amalgamated crew to the second place on the river. In the following year, 1836, St. John's, now head of the river, engaged in a match with the head boat at Oxford. This was Christ Church, who had rebumped Balliol after being bumped by them; but as they found some difficulty in taking a crew to Henley, where the race was to be rowed, they scratched, and Queen's, the third boat, bumped Balliol, and then defeated St. John's over the Henley course.

Colquhoun was one of the greatest promoters of rowing in his day. He gave the prize for scullers still known by his name at

Cambridge. This was in the first instance competed for on the London water, although confined to members of the University of Cambridge. The reason of this arrangement was possibly that Colquhoun was then himself amateur champion of the Thames. The first winner was Antrobus, an Etonian; Vincent, a Westminster, followed, and in 1840 Arthur Shadwell (Etonian) beat Vincent, but having migrated to Oxford, where he was for years a most successful steersman and coach (see his picture in 'Tom Brown'), Vincent walked over in 1841, and in 1842 the race was transferred to the Cam.



A Bump Imminent

It would be superfluous to enter into any detail of the matches between the two Universities at this period, yet a few side lights from memory may not be uninteresting. In 1829, when the first race was being rowed between the Universities, the rising star of watermanship at Eton was the young Marquess of Waterford. He had beaten in 1828 the regular school eight with his crew of Irishmen, the Erin-go-bragh; in the same year he defeated a Westminster crew in an *impromptu* match, and in 1829, when captain of the boats, won the first regular race between the two schools. He then went to Christ Church, and as no challenge was sent from Cambridge to Oxford for some years after the 1829 race, his

energy found a vent in a challenge to a London crew for a race at Henley, in which his boat, manned chiefly by Oxford Etonians and Christ Church men, was defeated. Bishop Pelham rowed in this race, which took place on June 18, 1831.

Lord Waterford looms large in the athletic horizon of his time, his dare-devil hardihood and unflinching pluck reminding one of the old Berserkers. In many of his sporting exploits he found a rival in Lord Alford, whose eight, when captain of the boats at Eton, he had defeated with his own Irish crew. In after years this school antagonism displayed itself in the hunting field and other arenas; and even amid the grand pageantry of the Eglinton tournament, in which they both figured, they could not be restrained from manifesting their personal antagonism after breaking their lances, by hammering away at one another with their swords until the Marshals of the Lists had to interfere and part them. After risking his life in every possible adventure, Lord Waterford finally lost it by a false step of his horse going through a gap at a walking pace.

In 1836, when the University race was revived, Cambridge experienced little difficulty in beating Oxford over the course from Westminster to Putney, the style of the Oxonians being very emphatically condemned by the judges of rowing. Oxford forbore to challenge their conquerors, and Cambridge made themselves amends for this omission by a match with the Leander, then the champion London club, which Cambridge won. In the next year, 1838, when this race was renewed, both boats were steered by watermen, and repeated fouls took place, the umpire finally giving his decision, 'no match.'

For this, and the next race with Oxford in 1839, Cambridge had the services of a first-rate stroke, Stanley, of Jesus College, an Etonian, who did much to improve the style of rowing in matches. Easily as Cambridge had won their race against Oxford in 1836, the Londoners could not but observe that their work was done with the arms rather than with the body, a bad tradition from the days when an old member of the Westminster crew of 1831, beaten by the Etonians at Maidenhead, has recorded how the muscles of his arms were so strained by his exertions that he was compelled to carry them in slings for days after the race. Stanley substituted for this vicious snatch the practice of getting forward and rowing the stroke right through with great rapidity, getting a thorough hold of the water. He was ably supported by his No. 7, Brett, of Caius, an Old Westminster, now Lord Esher. These were the first exponents of eight-oared rowing

that I remember, and I have never seen finer. Cambridge also had the services of the most thorough judge of watermanship that ever handled the rudder lines in the famous 'Tom Egan.' Their ascendency, therefore, was assured in 1839, 1840, and 1841.

Two questions agitating the rowing world at this period were definitely settled for the best. It had been the custom, at any rate had been assumed to be the custom, to row for wagers in all matches upon the Thames. 'Bell's Life' even states that the first match rowed between Eton and Westminster in 1829 was for a stake of 100*l.*, a statement which turns out to have been erroneous, but which serves to indicate the tone of public feeling at the time. In 1839 a member of the Leander Club contended in letters to the public press that a wager was an essential accompaniment to every sporting match, a doctrine which was forthwith repudiated on behalf of the Universities by Mr. C. J. (Lord Justice) Selwyn, at the dinner after the race of 1840. So far as I have been able to discover, the only race in which an academic crew ever rowed for a stake was the match against the Londoners made by Lord Waterford in 1831, although the 'Sporting Magazine' of August 20 in the same year records a match 'for 200*l.* a side between London and Etonians, the same crew who beat Westminster.'

Common report gave the credit of the Leander clubman's letters to Mr. Dalgleish, their stroke, and one of the most prominent members of their club. He was a wharfinger, a man of huge physique, who, when he fancied he was in danger of acquiring superfluous bulk, would strip and 'heave' coalsacks with the men on his wharf.

The other matter which was finally settled at this period was the abolition of the 'waterman steerer' system, and consequently of the 'fouling' which up to that time had formed no unimportant portion of the science of watermanship. The use of watermen as trainers survived, however, for some years. Oxford, who had had a bad beating again in 1839, retained in 1840 the services of Robert Coombes, then champion of the Thames, whose counsel certainly seems to have improved them, as they were only defeated, after a splendid race the whole way, by less than a boat's length. One of this crew, the late Godfrey Meynell, used to relate with some humour an anecdote of the way in which Edward Royds (one of the Henley seven, who died in 1894) first obtained his place in the boat. Meynell, who had learned his rowing at Shrewsbury School (where, as he used to say, the royal rule ran, 'Drop the feather, and peg away!') failed one day to

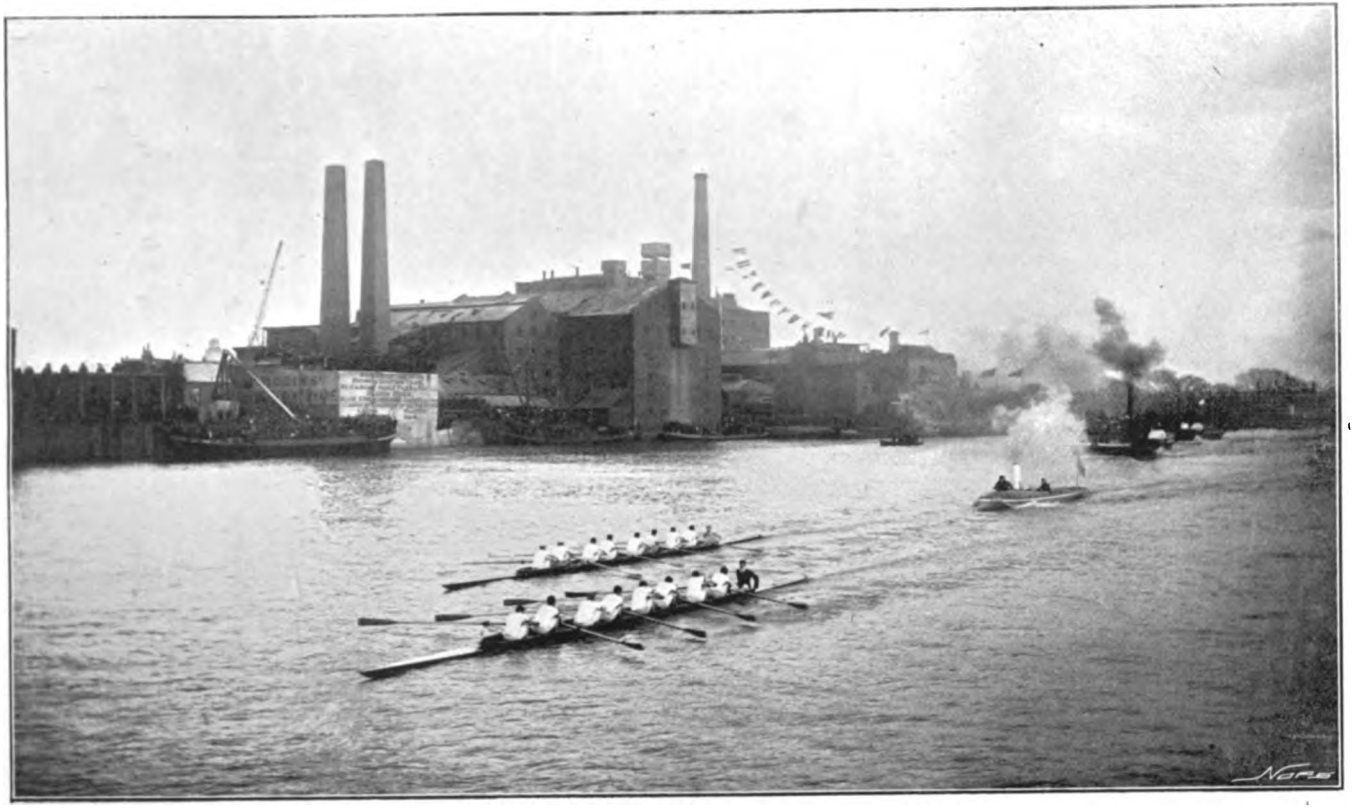
satisfy Coombes, who requested him to come down in a pair oar for a little private drill. Meynell thought that while it might not be advisable, perhaps, to invite too good an oar to be his partner, it would be as well to have a strong fellow who could do his share of the hard work. He remembered a stalwart Rugby freshman, whom he prevailed upon to partner him for the pull. Meynell felt, he said, just a little uneasy when he saw the amount of attention which the Mentor bestowed on Royds, but it was not until they returned, and Coombes asked Royds to go down in Meynell's place for the next practice, that he perceived how he had been 'hoist with his own petard.' In the sequel they both rowed.

The establishment of Henley Regatta about this time gave the Universities an opportunity for an informal meeting by entering for the Grand Challenge Cup, but they did not avail themselves of it until 1842; and even then Oxford withdrew owing to circumstances which illustrate the unsystematic character of the arrangements of that epoch, and to which I shall refer anon. The final heat for the Cup at the first regatta in 1839 was won by the Black Prince (Cambridge First Trinity) beating in a fine race Oxford Etonians. Sir Stafford Northcote, the first Lord Iddesleigh, rowed in the Oxford crew, and in the Cambridge was the late Sir Warrington Smyth, the only Westminster rowing man who did not join the Third Trinity Club.

The University boats met in 1841, rowing over the old Westminster to Putney course on April 14, when Cambridge won with ease. The stroke oar of both boats in this race was pulled by a Westminster man, and in the Cambridge crew there were two pair of brothers—the Crokers, one of whom was the steersman and the other bow oar, and the more famous Denmans, George, afterwards the judge, rowing No. 7.

The boats are described as being 'exactly alike in length, breadth, weight, and model, the only difference being that the Oxonians had their boat carvel-built—viz. the edges of the planks being so brought together as to rest on one another, thus giving a perfectly smooth surface outside, whilst the Cambridge boat was constructed upon the old clinker-built plan—*i.e.* with the planks overlapping each other.'

The length of the boats is stated to have been 52 feet 7 inches, but the weight is not given, which is to be regretted, since even our antiquarian collections do not contain, I fear, any specimen of the old racing craft, which in size and construction would be considered by a modern *connoisseur* as more akin to the man-of-war's gig than to the racing craft of the present day.



A Modern Race, as seen from Hammersmith Bridge

Although the time of this race was thirty-two minutes and a half, and the average time of the first five races over the Putney course was nearly thirty-two minutes, a great rate of speed could be attained by a well-built boat of the old construction when once got well under way; and although the exactitude in taking the time of the races now achieved had not then been perhaps attained, the discrepancy would not be considerable. I am certain that the momentum communicated to one of these prodigious craft was equal to that of the 'shells' of modern days. Of course some of the old boats were constructed on bad lines, or were ridiculously unwieldy, such as was that in which the Westminster boys rowed against Eton in 1831, into the capacious hold of which Canon Ellison and the other members of the Westminster crew found the Eton boat-builder's men fitting their own boat when they arrived at the scene of the contest. But such a boat as that in which the far-famed seven-oar crew rowed was a perfect piece of scientific boat-building, and to some extent the actual work as well as design of the Oxford captain. Like Colquhoun, Shadwell, and Egan, Menzies was a man whose science and judgment would compare with those of our best modern oarsmen, although lacking, of course, the experience of the past which has taught us so much, and the knowledge of those mechanical inventions which have worked such a revolution in rowing of late years. All the more honour to the men who solved so many difficulties and made so many improvements!

Mr. Menzies, who was at University College, had not learned rowing at any of the great schools where it was then practised; yet he, with his brother Sir Robert, Mr. Æneas Mackintosh (afterwards member for Inverness), and others, made the name of the 'John Cross' crew a word of power, and it frequently figures in the Henley lists during the lustrum 1840–45, as well as at the head of the Oxford river in 1841 and 1843.

After their defeat in 1841 Oxford renewed their protest against rowing at Easter, and challenged Cambridge to a summer race. Eventually this proposal was acceded to, and Oxford, with Menzies stroke, beat Cambridge for the first time from Westminster to Putney on June 11, 1842. The boats were both entered at Henley this year, but Oxford withdrew, as I mentioned briefly before, in consequence of the rejection of their protest against the entry of the names of certain oarsmen in two crews—Cambridge University and Cambridge Subscription Rooms. The latter represented one of those clubs formed in London for Oxford and Cambridge rowing men, whom the etiquette of that

period precluded from joining the Leander or other ordinary London rowing club. Crews with this qualification constantly competed in the earlier years of Henley Regatta, and in 1841 a Cambridge Rooms crew was beaten over the Putney course by the Leander. In the Henley entries of 1842, however, several members of Cambridge University were entered twice, the intention being to select the strongest crew for the Rooms, who were the holders. Ultimately, Oxford having withdrawn, the Cambridge Rooms beat the University crew.

This disappointment gave a stronger interest to the expected meeting of the Universities at Henley, for Oxford again declined an Easter meeting in 1843; but Cambridge did not put on a University crew, resting content with the championship of the First Trinity and the holders, the Cambridge Subscription Rooms. The former crew were beaten by Oxford University with some ease, and then the sudden indisposition of Mr. Menzies was the cause of that memorable feat of rowing known as the seven-oar race, about which so much has been said and sung (for Tom Hughes—whose brother George took stroke in Menzies' room, his place at No. 7 being filled by Lowndes, a Christ Church Etonian, the bowman—celebrated it in a classic ballad after the style of Macaulay's 'Lays of Ancient Rome'), that I need only add one note from a conversation which I held many years ago with one of the losing crew. 'No man,' said he, 'can do his best when out of temper, and the whole of the Rooms crew felt that we were in a false position, and were sulky and dispirited.'

Mr. MacMichael writes in his book of the boat in which the 'seven' rowed being preserved at Oxford as a sacred model. My own recollection is rather the reverse of this. It might have been said of the old boat as of the old horse:

> The high mettled racer's a hack on the road.

While the St. John's Torpid crew were practising in her in 1846 they ran into a punt and smashed her bows. I happened to go into King the boatbuilder's workshop during the repairs, and I bought a bit of the broken timbers; which I had carved into an escutcheon of arms for my room. In less than a fortnight the window of the tradesman who had shaped my relic was full of genuine pieces of the seven-oar, the wood of which appeared to have acquired a marvellous power of self-multiplication. Full twenty years afterwards that good old Oxford citizen, Thomas Randall, rescued the remains of the old wreck, and had that chair made of them which now adorns the Oxford University barge.

Menzies quitted Oxford in 1844, but he left behind him some excellent trained oarsmen, and probably the boating power of the University was never stronger than in that year. Cambridge and Leander were beaten without much difficulty at the Thames Regatta (first instituted in 1843, when the Gold Cup had been won by Oxford), while at Henley another stroke, Morgan, took the place of Tuke, who had rowed in London, and they beat Caius for the challenge cup. Both Morgan and Tuke were Etonians, and in the race at Henley only one man rowed in the Oxford boat who had not been at Eton. A great change for the votaries of aquatic sport, however, was looming in the distance by the introduction of outrigged rowlocks for boats, as great a revolution in its day as that which in after years was caused by sliding seats. This earlier innovation was an importation from the Tyne, where the brothers Clasper had worked marvels in a four-oared boat thus constructed, and ere long exhibited their superiority over South-country crews. Outriggers were first seen at Oxford in the boat of a first rate pair of oarsmen, Milman and Haggard (Westminster and Christ Church), who won the silver oars on the Isis in 1843, '44 and '45, also winning at Henley in 1846 and 1848. In the latter year they chose to enter as Johnson and Thompson, which occasioned a neat epigram from Arthur Shadwell's pen:

> Certamen fratres ineunt navale gemelli,
> Clarus remigio Thompson et clarus Ionson.
> Sed cui contingat nomen Thompson, cui nomen Ionson,
> Non ego, non alius, non scit Thompson nec Ionson!

One difficulty had to be grappled with by the 'fratres' when they adopted the new style of boat for the Oxford contest. In addition to the silver oars there was a silver rudder for the steersman, coxswainless pairs never having been contemplated by the donors of the prize. The contrivance they adopted was to place a very small man in the middle of the boat, between the two oarsmen, who, without using the rudder, steered them by word of mouth. Outriggers very speedily became quite the fashion for fours and pairs, but for some time it was supposed that an eight-oared outrigger could not be built with sufficient stiffness to carry a crew. When, therefore, Oxford accepted the challenge of Cambridge to row at Easter 1845, no question of change of boat was as yet entertained, although the change of course from below to above Putney Bridge was considered expedient, and acquiesced in by both sides. Easter happened to be early that year, so Saturday, March 15, was the date fixed upon; the state of the tide had unluckily not

been taken into account, and the race had to be rowed at six in the evening.

That spring was cold and ungenial, though without any serious interruption from frost; nor did the Oxford captain find it very easy to replace some of the old crew who had gone down. In fact, one of the places in the boat was filled by a Rugby freshman, who had not had as yet the opportunity of rowing in a college crew; brother to that Mr. Royds whose similar introduction to the 'Varsity boat I have already mentioned. The rowing career of the younger Royds, however, amply justified the captain's discernment. The fraternal tradition so frequent in its occurrence in Cambridge crews was maintained on this occasion by two Messrs. Harkness, while another of the Cantab oarsmen was Walter Scott Lockhart, grandson of the novelist, a fine handsome fellow, not too steady in his habits, who went into the army, and died early. In great contrast to modern usage the Oxford crew had only rowed over the course once before the race, and Cambridge only arrived at Putney on the Wednesday.

The weather on the 15th had become very cold and threatening. With the tide came up large blocks of floating ice, and huge flakes of snow fell at intervals from a mass of dark heavy cloud brought up by a gusty east wind. It was almost dark when the boats started. I was on board a steamer chartered by the Brasenose Boat Club, of which I was then secretary, and to the best of my recollection only three other steamers accompanied the race. Probably not more than 500 people witnessed the start. One of the newspaper accounts said that the cheers for Cambridge, as that crew took the lead, were 'tremendous;' but though hearty, the enthusiasts were too few to realise that epithet. The race itself was a simple procession, for though Oxford stuck to their work with unflinching endurance, ere long Cambridge, in the waxing darkness, vanished to a speck, and finally won by more than half a minute. The scene at Mortlake was indescribably dreary, and the unfortunate Oxford men discovered that the boat containing their coats and wraps had somehow failed to turn up, so they were fain to point their boat's nose down stream again and row as hard as they could to Putney. Indeed, *sauve qui peut* was the cry of the scanty company who had reached the winning-post. Just as our steamer was going about, we were hailed from the Westminster eight, which had contrived to get swamped, its crew begging for a passage back with us to Westminster Bridge. We gladly acceded to their request, but their jackets proved to be frozen to

the bottom of their boat, so we had to clothe them as well as to give them a lift. On the following morning, Sunday, March 16, it was found that the ebb tide had jammed so much ice against the numerous wooden piers of Old Putney Bridge, that the river above was a solid mass of frozen blocks from shore to shore!

I might, perhaps, reasonably close with this singular experience my desultory recollections of a period of boating history which rang out the old style of boats and oars, and rang in the new scientific *régime* which has progressed continuously to the

A Modern Race. The Finish at Mortlake

present day; but it will help to illustrate the University rowing to which I have been confining my retrospect if I make a few brief references to those school matches between Eton and Westminster which trained so many men of subsequent note at Oxford and Cambridge.

The idea of such a match was first suggested, as I have before incidentally mentioned, in 1820, when it was proposed to row 'from Westminster to Kew Bridge against tide, the Etonians refusing to row back.' This race was forbidden by the authorities of both schools, and the proposal was not renewed

until 1829, when the two crews started from Putney to row through Hammersmith (Old) Bridge and back.

Eton won with ease. Watermen steered both boats. In this race the Eton colour appears to have been blue, Westminster white. In 1831, on May 12 (Ascension Day), a date fixed to allow those who had been elected from St. Peter's College to the Universities to row, Westminster met Eton again at Maidenhead, for a race three miles with and three against stream, when Eton gained a second victory by a quarter of a mile, doing the distance in 45 minutes. From an observation of Canon Ellison's which I have already quoted, and other information, I cannot help fancying that at this period the chances of Westminster were not improved by the monopoly of Roberts, the school boat-builder, of whom an epigrammatist wrote:

> Ille quidem refluos æstus et flumina nôrat
> Et quæ cuique essent carbasa danda rati;
> Non illo invito quisquam per Thamesis undas
> Ire, nec audebat pandere vela puer.

At any rate, it was not until they ceased to row in a boat of Roberts' that Westminster won a race.

In 1834, a race between the two schools, which was to have been rowed at Staines, was prevented by a prohibition from the Dean of Christ Church and the Master of Trinity, who 'intimated that unless the King's scholars of Westminster gave their honour that they would not row, they would not receive them into their colleges.' Some correspondence in the public press ensued, which led to a declaration on the part of the head-master of Westminster, that he disapproved of such matches 'on account of the intemperance and excesses to which both they and I knew by experience they led.'

However, in 1836 a race between the schools was rowed at Datchet, two miles down stream and back, with watermen to steer. After a series of fouls, Eton won by three lengths. In this race the Westminster crew wore 'blue-striped jerseys; Eton, parti-coloured satin caps, light blue and white jerseys cut off at the elbow and trimmed with blue satin.' In 1837 a race was arranged over the same course, but a mile and a quarter each way, with gentlemen coxswains instead of watermen, Arthur Shadwell steering Eton, and Lord Somerton Westminster. The latter won by six boat lengths, having led Eton to the turn, then been fouled and passed, and repassed them again. The Rev. William Rogers, of Bishopsgate, who rowed in the Eton crew, has left on

record ('Reminiscences,' 1888) his impressions of this memorable race, which was not only witnessed by Dr. Hawtrey, of Eton, but by King William IV., whose figure, in a closed carriage, wrapped in a white great-coat, Mr. Rogers remembers about 150 yards from the bridge. 'As soon as he saw the Westminster were ahead he pulled down the blinds and drove back to the Castle, which I do not think he afterwards left.' The race was on May 4, and the King died on June 20.

William IV. was, like his father George III., a staunch patron of Eton; some of the inferior publications of the day gave credence to a story that he invited the Westminster crew to dinner the day before the race, in order that they might have less chance of winning. The Westminster book, however, mentions what was clearly the foundation of this fable—namely, an invitation to the crew from the King to go over Windsor Castle. The same document observes also that, as the blue and white colours in which Westminster had been in the habit of rowing were considered too like the Eton blue, they were exchanged for pink.

It might have been supposed that the sanction of the boat race by the King and the head-master of Eton would have had some effect upon the opposition of the Westminster pedagogues, but such was not the case; and on July 31, 1838, passengers over Westminster Bridge were indulged with the extraordinary spectacle of the Eton eight in readiness to start for a race to Putney, while three of the Westminster crew had been intercepted by the head-master and consigned to parental durance. Eton, with chivalric forbearance, took in the Westminster coxswain and rowed over the course.

Wiser counsels, however, prevailed when the race was next proposed in 1842, and full leave was given to both schools. Eton had a fine crew but a very inferior stroke, and Westminster won from Barker's Rails to Putney by 35 seconds, time 28¾ minutes. Milman, Haggard, and Burton in the winning crew, and Tuke, Wilson, and Stapylton from the Eton boat, were subsequently well-known champions of the Dark Blue.

In 1843 the Etonians, with Tuke's fine stroke, had little difficulty in beating a very moderate Westminster crew from Putney to Mortlake; and in 1844 a ridiculous correspondence, for which see 'Punch' of that date, terminated in the race being abandoned. But the match of 1845 was in many respects especially noteworthy. Eton had a good crew, and everything went smoothly, July 29, from Barker's Rails to Putney, being the date and place fixed. Westminster was represented, as

usual, by a much smaller set of boys, the stroke, Rich, only weighing 8 st. 5 lb. So Sir Patrick Colquhoun procured for them an outrigged boat, 55 ft. long and 2½ ft. in beam, built by Noulton. On their first essay the boat was nearly swamped from want of protection in the bows; but when this omission had been supplied she turned out a first-rate craft, owing in no slight degree to Colquhoun's vigilant supervision, and on the day of the race slipped easily away from the heavier Eton ship and came in first by 1 minute 5 seconds. The success of this experiment at once set at rest the misgivings which had been entertained as to

From an old picture

outrigged eight-oars, and every important match has since been rowed in them, although for a short time a compromise—outriggers at the stroke and bow thwarts only—found favour with very heavy crews. From 1845 to the introduction of sliding seats little alteration took place.

A picture of this boat as she appeared coming in at Putney Bridge was painted for Westminster School, and an engraving from it has been more than once reproduced. Such, however, is the oblivion to which the exploits of even a generation back are consigned by the public, that this print was copied not long ago into one of the best of our illustrated periodicals as a representation of the first University race rowed in outrigged boats.

DRIVING AT THE CAPE

BY CAPTAIN M. F. RIMINGTON (INNISKILLING DRAGOONS)

In England coaching is a revival, but in South Africa it is still a necessity. Perhaps I should here premise that I am dealing chiefly with the driving of the coaches, Cape carts, &c., which carry mails and passengers to the towns and villages separated by many miles from the railway stations and ports. The Cape cart is a very strong two-wheeled vehicle with tremendous strength in its axle, springs and pole, though comparatively light in other respects. In some very out of the way places the carts are of the roughest description and are usually known as 'gin cases,' from the shape of the body, which is like a box placed on two wheels. These when loaded with the mails leave little or no room for the passengers, who are perched on them as best they can, and often tied on to prevent their being jerked off on rough bits of the road.

On the more frequented roads such as that from Natal to Johannesburg before the railway was completed, more accommodation was afforded for passengers, and omnibuses in some cases superseded Cape carts, the latter being kept for the rough bits, such as the descent from Laing's Nek to Newcastle, where the Drakensberg is crossed. On this line the mails had to be carried up to time under heavy fines for delay Two hundred miles of country had to be traversed, with, generally speaking, no road except such as was made by the track of waggons; five or six streams and one fair-sized river, the Vaal, to be crossed—and a pace of eight to ten miles an hour was kept up night and day. To do this with

very badly broken horses or mules required consummate nerve, pluck, and endurance, on the part of the drivers. Here it may be said that the driver is essentially 'the whip' in South Africa, as very often, especially with a team of eight or ten, he has a half-caste lad, a sort of understudy, who holds the reins and is called the leader: the driver meantime uses the whip, occasionally putting a hand on the reins as may be required.

But with a team of six horses the driver usually disdained a leader's assistance. Certainly Jim Welsh, Alfred, and Hans—both the latter being half-castes—seldom had anyone to help them when coming down Laing's Nek.

The whip is a formidable weapon, consisting of ten to fourteen feet of bamboo, with a hide thong and giraffe skin lash: this will reach the leaders some fifteen to twenty yards away. A skilled performer will kill small birds by the wayside, and it is on record that a driver whilst cutting at a cobra caught it with the thong and brought it back to the cart very nearly amongst the passengers. The triumph of skill is for a driver of ten horses to sling out the whip perfectly straight over the near wheeler's head, loosing the right hand as he does so, to get it out as far as possible, just hitting the near leader; then, pulling it back sharply, he hits the off leader by throwing his whip straight along the offside horses; after this he hits the near and off horses in order, and in turn from front to rear, till he catches his whip up and double-thongs the wheelers. If mules are driven the 'leader' usually has a short whip, answering to the 'short tommy' of the old stage coaches, with which he urges on the wheelers, and runs alongside the team in heavy bits of 'road.'

The same set of harness is used on a journey from start to finish. Collars would therefore be out of question and so breast harness is used. At a change of horses or 'outspan,' as it is called, the belly-band and throat-lash are unbuckled, and with one hoist the harness is on the ground and ready to be slipped over the heads of the fresh team. The pole is kept up by a neckbar which depends from a strap going over the wheelers' necks, and answers to the curricle bar. The whole operation of harnessing is thus extremely simple and only occupies two or three minutes.

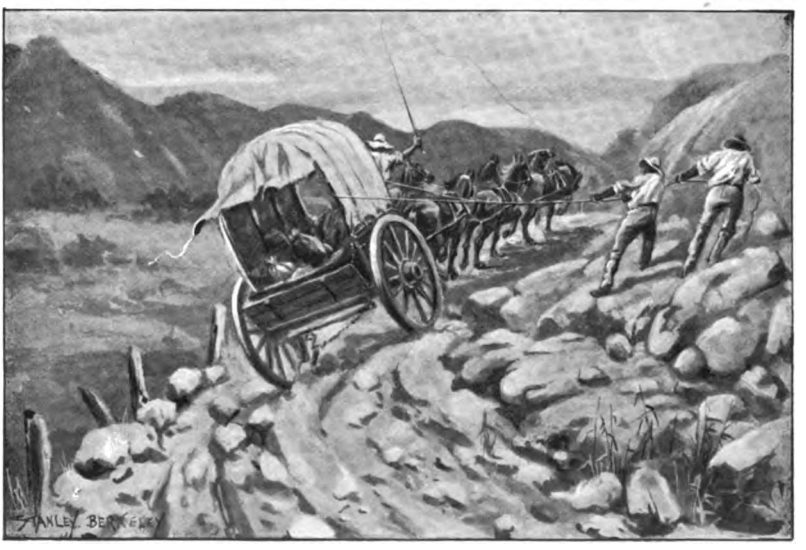
It is quite a sight to see the start of a post-cart. There are nearly always a few 'doubtful starters,' and it is here that 'the leader' comes in useful. I well remember seeing a powerful half-caste holding a 'reim' [1] fastened round the fetlock of an unbroken horse

[1] A 'reim' is a strip of rawhide usually from 6 to 12 feet long, and is used instead of rope at the Cape.

and literally dragging it along whilst the driver kept the whip going; the remainder of the team dashed off, and the 'leader,' after sprinting for thirty yards, jumped up behind as best he could.

Sometimes, however, after one of these flying starts, the driver had to make two or three circles before he got them sufficiently in hand to dash at a ford close to the outspan. Should a horse get down he will be mercilessly dragged, whilst if he kicks over the traces they will send him along till he kicks back again, and not one horse in twenty ever wants a second lesson. There is usually plenty of room at the start, which is a great advantage with a jibbing team.

Many of the Cape drivers, though not the best performers as



AN AWKWARD CORNER

a rule, separate the offside leader's rein from the other three reins, which are held in the same fashion as the same three reins in England. I believe the origin of this is that taking up a loop of a few inches would not have any effect with a team of eight or ten horses, as some six feet of rein must be taken up hand over hand to bring them round sharp. The whip is used, however, a great deal in bringing the leaders over to one side or the other.

Anyone who has driven a galloping team knows that, with a dead pull, one could never stop four horses really bent on going. If this is so with four horses, and with the assistance which a high box-seat gives, it may be imagined what would happen with

galloping horses, with snaffles on, driven by a man sitting low down in a Cape cart. If the driver desires to stop his team when galloping, he knocks them out of their stride by zigzagging them from side to side, at the same time whistling to them.

I think it was the first time that I went up to Johannesburg, when it only consisted of a few tin huts and tents, about '86, that I drove with one of the Welshes through the Free State.

We had just started, and Welsh was doing a bit of a gallop—a favourite way to steady the team—when the pole hook, or the reim which is usually substituted for it, gave way. The four leaders dashed off into the veldt at a tearing gallop and never stopped till they fell over some low rocks half a mile away. After they had been brought back and the trek-tow mended with the ever-necessary reims, we went on again, only to have it break again some twenty miles further on. I have never known this to happen before or since. Frightful accidents do occur occasionally, however, the worst being caused by the pole, or, as the Dutch call it, 'disselboom,' breaking on a down grade. There is only one chance then and that is to gallop the team until rising ground is reached.

The difficulty of keeping horses on their legs on the clay soil when slippery from rain is extraordinary: with a heavy load a foot-break is absolutely indispensable; it saved me more than once when coming down to the Ingogo river from Laing's Nek, especially when, as happened on one very wet day, both near-side horses were down at once. The tracks were often frightfully rough from the wash of the rain forming what was called corduroy. Neglect of the warning cry 'Hold on, corduroy!' might result in a passenger being chucked out of the cart. If the ordinary track gets washed away by the tropical rain storms, a new one is started by the drivers.

Woe betide the post-cart which happens on a washed-away road in the dark! Besides the powerful lantern which is usually placed above the driver's head, another is often slung on to the bridle bar which connects the two leaders. It is only their thorough knowledge of the country which enables the drivers to travel at night on roads which it would be madness for anyone else to drive along. Many a weary mile have I trudged in the wet and darkness leading the way with a lantern, possibly only to come at last to a stream too swollen to be safe for crossing. Failing information as to the drift from some waggon driver outspanned near by, the only way was to take one of the leaders out, and after stripping, to mount, go in, and try the ford: not

SHORT TOMMY COMES INTO PLAY

a pleasant job, if when one got into the middle one found oneself in a regular millrace and the horse beginning to swim. One was glad enough then to find oneself back at a place where a landing could be effected.

Sometimes the coaches both met at a river which was 'up;' then the passengers would improvise a raft and get across with the mails and exchange coaches. The drivers will, however, attempt a crossing if there is the least chance of getting over, even with a swim for it. Many times have South African papers recorded the 'loss of life of all on board' during one of these attempts. Rider Haggard's 'Jess' gives no fancy picture of a Cape cart in a swollen river. I crossed the same river at Standerton, not far from where that scene is laid, late one night on our way to Johannesburg; the water was over the ponies' backs and it would have gone hard with us had I not taken the precaution to get a native voerlooper from a waggon which had just crossed, to lead our ponies.

Rivers rise, or as they say 'come down,' so quickly that they form a great element of danger to drivers. On one occasion when driving down from Zululand I had sent my servant on by a short cut to the White Umvolosi Drift. He crossed the river and waited for me on the other side. I arrived about twenty minutes after and called out to him to know if it was safe to drive over. He replied that the water had risen at least a foot since he crossed. Whilst we considered the matter it rose several inches. A native groom whom we sent in on a pony was carried down fifty yards before he got out on our side again; so we determined to wait till next day, and it was fortunate we did, as the river rose several feet. Next day it had fallen considerably and we crossed; but in the middle one of the wheelers jibbed and broke the harness. One of us stripped and mended it; but even then we did not get through till we had found a Dutchman to hitch on six oxen and pull us out. To our delight the jibber was pulled on to his head and half-drowned before he could get on his legs. We should have had a very rough time if the river had come down on us whilst stuck in the middle of it.

In wet weather the roads become almost impassable and the holes where an ox-waggon's wheel has been dug out often cause an upset. If the road is steep, it is not an uncommon thing to find the cart sliding down till it is a case of 'the cart before the horses.' Should there be any obstruction in the road, or a big hole, it is best to point the pole at it, as the horses will then pass on each side of it and the wheels follow. Should the cart have to

go along the side of a steep hill, it is not an uncommon plan to get the passengers out to haul on to a reim or rope fastened to the rail of the cart. A crank or bent axle is a great protection from an upset, as the centre of gravity is then much lower. With very heavy carts, however, it is not used, as the straight axle is much stronger.

I had a crank axle on the cart which I used most of the time I was in South Africa, and the springs were strengthened by being bound with raw hide. I never had an upset with it, though I drove it over many rough places and frequently galloped it

SPEEDING A TEAM OF PONIES

across the open country. Though a great believer in careful driving, I think there are few things more elating than putting four racing ponies in a two-wheeled cart and 'speeding' them, as the Americans say, on some good turf. It is advisable, however, to have them trained to stop at your whistle; they soon learn this and will steady from full gallop to a walk in twenty or thirty yards.

With plenty of room at the start we never had any hesitation in putting a couple of raw ponies into a team, with a stone in front of the wheel till the start was made *down hill*. The team was usually on the move before they had time to find out what had happened; they were then kept going, and their attention

distracted by the whip till they had warmed to the work. After this they were 'quiet in harness.' Horses learn to jib less readily where breast harness is used, as with it one can more easily protect the breast, by means of sheepskin, from the galls and raws which in most cases cause jibbing. To drive a determined jibber where the roads are bad, and a heavy pull through swamp or sand is a frequent occurrence, is no joke and may mean an hour's delay. The best way I have ever seen to start a jibbing pair is to put a rope through both horses' nosebands or through the snaffle rings and pull their heads together and to one side.

A good way of accustoming a horse to harness is to fasten him to the harness of one of the wheelers and let him trot alongside for a few miles. Instead of a yard of tin a bugle is carried by the mail-cart drivers, and the old Irish maxim 'keep a trot for the avenue' is not forgotten. However tired the team may be, they are brought into the villages or up to the outspan at a gallop, with the bugle sounding, and are pulled up 'all standing.' Then the harness is slipped off, the horses first take a roll in the dust, and then move off to the nearest watering place, after which they graze till they are driven up to their stable and fed with mealies.

The stages vary considerably from twelve to twenty miles; to save long stages between two farms tin sheds were erected half way and a native left in charge. One of these, being asked if he did not find this very lonely, said, 'No, sah, the rats come after the mealies and the snakes come after the rats.'

Though at the time one frequently railed at the great discomforts of travelling by coach in South Africa, now I cannot help looking back with pleasure to the many curious experiences I had during the nine years I spent there.

INTER-'VARSITY ATHLETICS

BY W. BEACH THOMAS

Illustrated from Photographs by MESSRS. STEARN, *of Cambridge*

'REMEMBER, that he who runs may read,' said my Oxford tutor on giving me leave to stay up to train. It was the first time that he had been known to deviate into humour, and no other aberration has since been recorded against him. It was, however, easier to forgive the witticism than to follow the advice, for training is a most absorbing occupation. It is generally supposed that an athlete has this advantage over a rowing man, that he is his own trainer and under no thraldom to the habits and appetites of seven or more companions. But his freedom is more imaginary than actual. First, if he is at Oxford, there is the tyranny of his 'scout;' and doubtless a Cambridge 'gyp' is scarcely less aggressive. Before I received the little card from the authorities requesting me to order blue-trimmed clothing from the regulation tailor, I had been accustomed to take cocoa for breakfast. This concentrated beverage was at once cut off. 'You'll never win on that stuff, sir,' said Gibbs. 'When I used to run——' But the tale of Gibbs's youthful triumphs hardly

warrants repetition; all running men's scouts have been runners, just as all rowing men's scouts have been 'oars,' and both classes are fuller of stereotyped theories than a coach. Gibbs would not, of course, brook contradiction, so I obeyed this and other behests like a lamb.

But my troubles began even before the arrival of the college tea and tannin. Punctually at 8 A.M. I was turned out of bed with ungentlemanly brusqueness, forced to tub in the coldest water, and hounded out into the meadows for a preliminary 'breather.' Then at last came breakfast, consisting of eggs, a huge steak, marmalade, and the liquid as specified. The period of incapacity ensuing was followed by a long walk, a dip into the fifth Æneid, as being applicable, and a light lunch. In the afternoon I changed despots.

Always intensely keen on the individual progress of his team, our treasurer rarely absented himself from the Iffley running ground. It was necessary there to undergo a rigorous cross-questioning on the day's doings, and to show satisfactorily that the official programme of laps and walks had been religiously observed. 'Let me have a list of your *work*' was the usual phrase. It is on record that a certain Scotchman, who 'joked with deeficulty,' and imagined the 'list of work' to refer to his classical studies, answered that he had been studying Kant on 'the synthetic unity of apperception.' That Scotchman still remains the sole instance of a man allowed to train on his own lines.

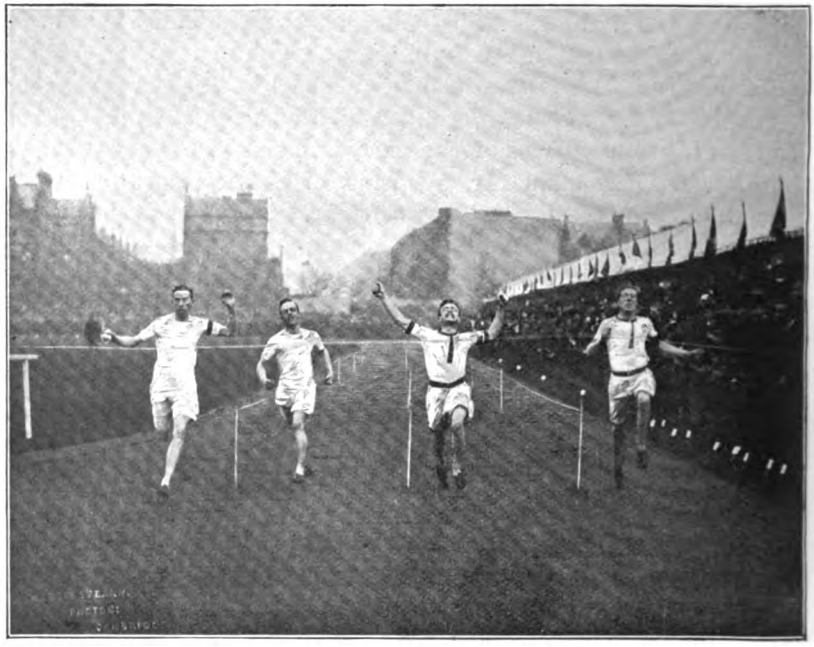
The athlete is also his own tyrant. His attention is so concentrated on his own person that he becomes a valetudinarian. A stiff calf or strain, or a few minutes' wakefulness, is at once taken as an excuse to consult the doctor, who is specially retained. On one occasion the team had assembled in London a few days before the sports in a particularly nervous state. Everybody had a weakness somewhere, but it was felt to be too expensive to consult London specialists individually. We therefore sent our most genuine invalid—who was also, luckily, our most accomplished hypocrite—to simulate our various complaints. He was fairly successful on the whole, and returned with prescriptions for five of us, apologising to the rest that the doctor's patience had given out as he mentioned his sixth malady. Yet, in spite of all drawbacks, few occupations are more amusing than training in company. As long as you take plenty of exercise and keep in good health, nothing else seems to matter much. One of the most successful quarter-milers that ever ran—Macaulay, of Trinity Hall—is said to have hurried back to the dressing-room, after a victorious

race, to see if his pipe was still in, while his defeated opponent addressed a lament to his faded meerschaum.

But the age is canting over so decidedly towards professionalism that such unorthodoxy will soon be impossible; the utmost 'rigour of the game' is demanded of all votaries. Training accounts from America read like a page out of Plato's 'Republic.' The leading athletes are nursed at the public expense, in a sort of hydropathic establishment, 'standing in its own grounds,' where trainers, a running-ground, punch-balls, shower-baths, and all the latest appliances and luxuries are in readiness. The inmate, under penalty of expulsion, must conform to all rules and regulations, and harbour no other thought at all than how best to harden nerve and muscle. The end in view is no doubt attained, but the worth of the end is another question. It would be interesting to contrast with this American system the training experiences of the early athletes—of the Attorney-General, who as plain Mr. Webster, of Trinity, sprinted away from the Earl of Jersey in '65; or of Mr. Chinnery, who began his long series of victories at the first championship meeting in '66.

It is the fashion to talk as if latter-day athletes were a vastly superior race to the heroes of the past. A comparison of, at any rate, Inter-'Varsity sports shows, however, as much degeneration in some events as progress in others. Those athletes of the 'Sixties and early 'Seventies whose whiskered photographs hang bleaching on the walls of the pavilions were at least incomparable sprinters. Tennent in '68, and Davies, who also held the long-jump record in '74, both accomplished level time, or 10 sec. in the 100 yards, while anything slower than 10⅕ sec. was not recorded for many years. The winner of the championship sprint almost always hailed from either Oxford or Cambridge until 1880, but from then till '92 not a single 'Varsity athlete has been good enough to compete. The last two or three years have shown a better record, and this year Thomas—who, of course, comes from the Principality—is again, after an interval of twenty years, credited with level time. His running on April 2 was not quite up to this standard, but still the race was an exceptional one. For three men to finish, as the photograph shows, in a lump in 10⅕ sec. on a very slow path is quite an unprecedented performance. Who really won the race it is impossible to tell. The three judges agreed only in placing Jordan third, while a good half of the adjacent spectators were confident he was first. One judge was certain that Thomas won, the other equally sure that Carter was well in front. The

referee could not separate them. The difficulty of deciding will be best realised if the matter be considered in this light:—Supposing two men to run a dead-heat, it follows that the runner nearer the judges will conceal the further. Again, if the near man is much the bigger of the two, he will also overlap his opponent, even if the latter be really a fraction in the rear. Then comes the question, Is the judge to consider the hidden man as second or equal first? In this age of mechanical contrivances it is odd that some self-registering device has not been invented, which should indicate at what exact point the tape

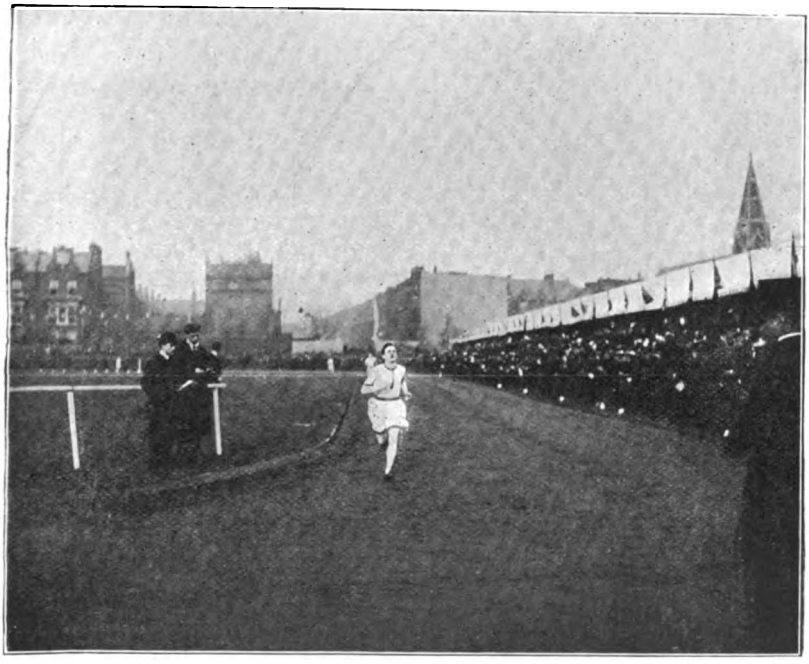


FINISH OF THE 100 YARDS

was first touched. A famous scientific don at Oxford sketched out to me a very simple piece of mechanism which would attain the desired end with little trouble or expense. Perhaps it will soon be adopted, for athletics are becoming progressive in this direction. A new addition to the pleasure of the crowd was this year adopted in the shape of a gigantic speaking-trumpet, called by the learned a megaphone, and by the vulgar an extinguisher. The inventor claims for his trumpet that it enables the natural voice to be heard a mile off, but inventors are proverbially partial. However, it at any rate enabled even the remotest of

the spectators to keep up with the progress of the jumping and weight-putting events.

The men of science might also be appealed to on the subject of timing. In this year's sports the official time was twice questioned. In the three-mile the time was announced as 14 min. 47 sec., which would make the pace of Fremantle's last lap incredibly fast as compared with the others. But this mistake proved capable of remedy, for it was found that the watch had been wrongly read, not wrongly stopped, though



FREMANTLE WINS THE THREE MILES FOR OXFORD

there is still some doubt whether the time was 14 min. 57 sec. or 15 min. 7 sec.

In the quarter-mile also the official record was $\frac{4}{5}$ sec. slower than two 'press' watches, but it is probable that the slower time of 49$\frac{4}{5}$ sec. was correct enough. The amateur time-keeper has before now been discovered to wait for the report of the pistol before starting his watch, and the difference between the flash and report at such a distance would, the scientific say, very nearly explain the whole of the divergence. Some mechanism that was less liable than a human finger to accidental or interested errors

would be a welcome invention. Nor would some such device be at all more complicated than several lately adopted devices, such as that for discovering 'sugaring' in a boat, or the pace of a cricket-ball.

The curious pastime entitled 'throwing the hammer,' which took place on a corner of the ground simultaneously with the long jump, was as pitiable as usual. Rather more than half the throws were, so to speak, 'no-throws,' and the rest neither skilful nor successful. Modern degeneracy or disgust has been apparent for some years in the records of this event, and perhaps a famous hammer-thrower of the past was justified in his Homeric lament over the puny men of to-day. But, in fact, both weight and hammer are best wielded by men of years. Cambridge now possess an altogether exceptional weight-putter in Bullock, yet he proved quite unable to cope with his aged rival of the L. A. C.

THE QUARTER GOES TO OXFORD

The introduction of these two events in the sports is historically interesting. A brawny Scotchman, whose profession was feats of strength, somehow became acquainted with the originators of 'Varsity sports, and induced them, out of admiration for his own performances, to include first the weight and a year later the hammer in the list of events. The two were immediately added

to the programme for the championship, solely out of a desire to enrol at this meeting as many 'Varsity candidates as possible. It was this action that turned what was meant as a mere experiment into an established custom. In spite of annual protests from Oxford, there has been no change since '67. The 'Varsities are

VASSALL CLEARS 22 FEET 7 INCHES

so tied by precedent that alteration would have been equally difficult to accomplish if an egg-and-spoon race or a Highland jig had been originally established.

In many ways the first rough suggestions drawn up in '65 compare favourably with the present programme. The events were then only eight in number—a steeplechase, two hurdle-races (in one of which the obstacles were interspersed at the caprice of ground-man), two jumps, and three flat races.

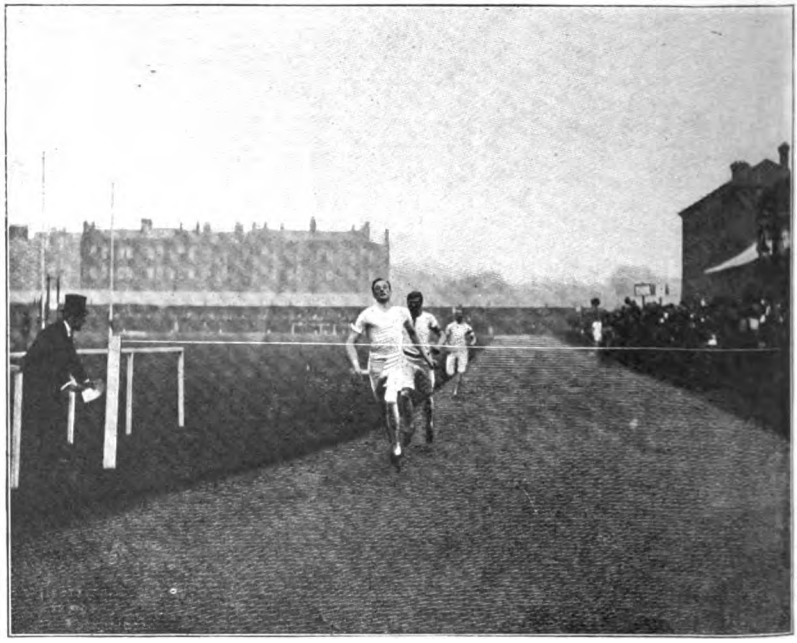
The preference shown for combinations of running and jumping is probably due to the early connection of athletics and steeplechase riding. Such was no doubt the origin of several cross-country institutions elsewhere. For instance, at Shrewsbury, one of the first schools to start a system of 'runs,' the terminology was all drawn from hunting; they have a huntsman, two whips, a fox, and so on. Further, in the annual senior and junior steeplechases the printed card of competitors is modelled

on that of a race meeting. Every runner is nicknamed and described as a jockey, and awarded an owner, in this way:—

Owner	Horse	Jockey
Mr. Jones.	Scarlet Runner.	C. Smith.

As a rule, 'Mr. Jones' was really the trainer of 'C. Smith,' but in the few cases where the runner had found no friend to indulge in training runs with him a fancy name was substituted. Of course, in the Inter-'Varsity sports all traces of such an origin have been lost; but the gain to the meeting, either as a spectacle or a performance, is more than dubious.

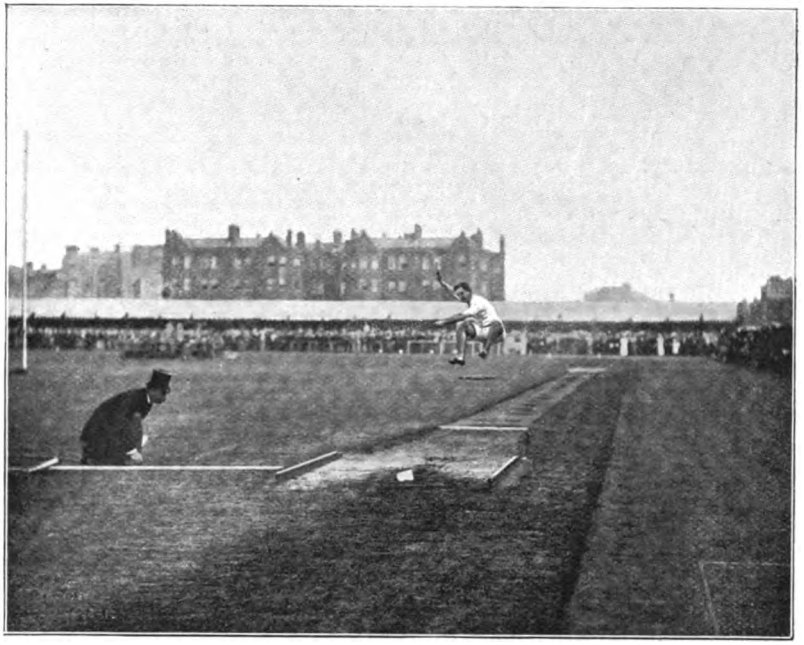
However, in running pure and simple, there has been enough development to atone for many lesser defects. There are several



LAST YEAR'S QUARTER

reasons for this temporal improvement, but the chief is the power of imitation. The monkey-like American Myers came over in '81, and, merely by showing that a quarter-mile was properly a sprint and not a waiting race, improved the average time of the race by nearly a second. In Inter-'Varsity sports Monypenny first beat 50 sec. or level time in '92, and both Fitz-Herbert and Jordan have repeated the feat in the last two years. The

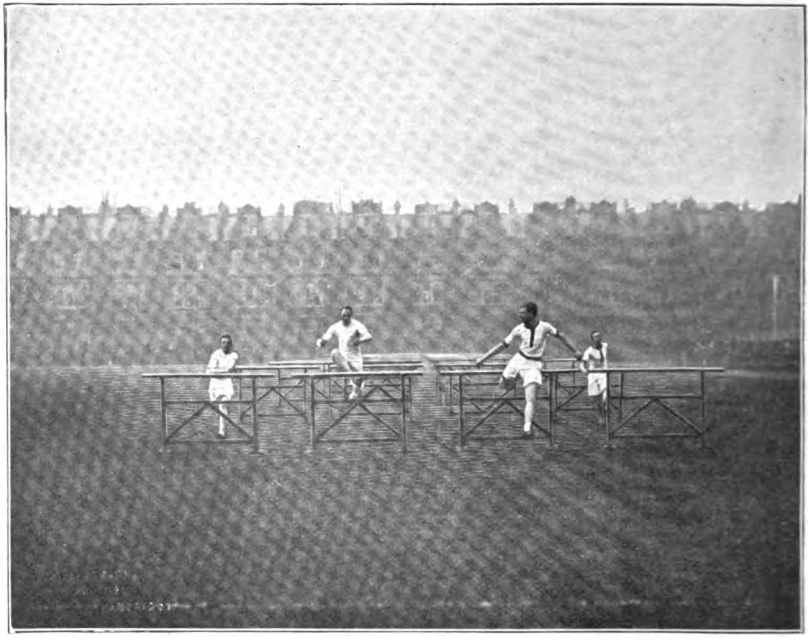
best time, as also the best race on record, was last year's. If ever a race is to be thought worthy of literary treatment, this quarter-mile should be selected first. 'Runs,' technically so called, have been so often described graphically and with literary skill



FRY'S RECORD JUMP

that it is surprising how carefully authors and journalists have avoided both enthusiasm and style in accounts of the races of mere men. A photograph is some help, and a series would be more; but pictures cannot pick out the 'psychological moment,' nor the arrestment of an agonised expression reproduce the excitement of the original struggle. Another successfully imitated athlete was Greig, famous especially as a long-jumper. Up till '90, 22 ft. had only twice been recorded in Inter-'Varsity athletics, while from '90 to '97 the distance has been exceeded seven times. Greig himself, by the way, was far more consistent than any of his successors. In his last year every one of his four jumps was well over 22 ft., the best being 22 ft. 10 in. The secret of his success lay in the height he rose from the ground. In the same way Fry, in his record leap of 23 ft. 6½ in., was said to have been as much as 5 ft. off the ground at the top of the curve. That height is doubtless an exaggeration, but the photograph when

compared with others—for instance, Vassall's of this year—makes it clear that he surpassed other jumpers in altitude as well as in length. Mathematicians have been several times asked to decide the question in the abstract, but have mostly fallen foul of each other. One hotly maintained that it was impossible for a man to cover the distance at all, others argued that solution of the problem was impossible, and the rest produced answers differing by as much as 2 ft. It is a pity that instantaneous photography was not invented in the early days of athletics. Not only would



GARNIER WINS THE HURDLES EASILY

it be very interesting to have pictures of famous racers and races, such as the dead-heat in the three-mile between Hawtrey and Benson in '72, or of the then rubicund Attorney-General in '65, but the comparison would be practically instructive. For instance, there is no doubt that Garnier's victories in the hurdle race in '96 and '97 are directly due to imitation of his father, who ran the same race in the same time in '71 and '72. Or, again, supposing Brooks had been handed down to posterity as he cleared the bar at 6 ft. 2½ in., or 'Hammer Hales' as he was speeding the hammer to its distant bourne, present jumpers and throwers

would have made a more successful attempt to achieve grace and consistency. Photographs of recent competitors in these events show a vision of feet swinging capriciously, and helpless humanity dragged from its circle by victorious matter. The triumph of matter over mind and muscle is the final verdict at most hammer-throwing competitions at both Oxford and Cambridge.

But in spite of the many drawbacks, chief of which is the April weather, more capricious even than the breath of popular favour, athletics are yearly increasing in popularity among all classes. The pastime has already begun to assume the cosmopolitan character due to its naturalness, and soon we may be comparing our runners with the Egyptian postmen, the Indian coolies, and the descendants of the Olympic Greeks, as well as with the highly trained athletes of Yale and Harvard.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

EVERY year I look through the list of two-year-olds to take note of those that are most neatly named, the indispensable qualification being that both sire and dam must be indicated. There is scope for the exercise of more wit, and perhaps of humour also, than most people imagine. On the whole, owners have done fairly well with the two-year-olds of the season, though there are few names that strike one as peculiarly happy, such as 'Peccavi' for the son of Wild Oats and Afterthought, which has seldom been beaten. I think, going in alphabetical order, 'Adjutant' for the Zealot—Drill colt is not bad; 'Air Gun' does well for the Ayrshire—Lucky Shot filly, and 'Agnes Grey' for the grey daughter of Pepper-and-Salt and Simple Agnes. 'Arabian Knight' is very fair for a Lowland Chief—Fatima colt, and 'Bequest' springs naturally from Testator—Festive. Although 'Galopin' has nothing to do with 'Gallop,' a pun is at times permissible, and it must have been a temptation to call the daughter of Galopin and Can't 'Canter.' 'The Conspirator' is more than passable for a son of Hawkeye and Hush, but perhaps 'Lifer' would have been better than 'The Convict' for the Van Dieman's Land—For Ever filly? Lord Cadogan scores with 'Cranbourne Chase' for a daughter of Salisbury and Galop, and

'Drachma' hits off the Piræus—Bimetallism filly, except that just at present many people are heartily sick of the Greeks and all belonging to them. Prince Soltykoff's horses are often well named, and 'Ecu d'Or' is excellent for a son of Gold and Light of Other Days. 'Gallina' (Gallinule—Ina) is almost too obvious to be commended. I rather like 'Grammarye' for the Chittabob —Surprise colt. Grammarye is described in the dictionary as the art of necromancy,' but the use of the word in the 'Ingoldsby Legends' (where, of course, Chittabob is found) rather suggests the diabolical. 'Gun-Runner' well passes muster for the Petronel —Flight colt, though gun running has really nothing to do with flight, and is rather a business performed with quiet and caution.

'Intimidator' is a capital name for the Timothy—Strike colt; 'La Nonne' was tolerably obvious for the Retreat—Rosary filly; and the Duke of Devonshire has well named the Morion—Miracle colt 'Lohengrin.' Those who remember Webb's accident on St. Angelo at Manchester will understand why the St. Angelo—Mishap colt is called 'Manchester.' 'Mellow' (*Mel*anion—Bil*low*) makes itself. 'Mint' fulfils one great requirement of a name, to recall the parentage, Gold—Lady Minnie. 'Night Mail' (Poste Restante—Cynthia) is excellent. Sir Blundell Maple hits the mark with 'Penny Ugly' for the son of Common and St. Valentine, and the Conservative student of names will, of course, approve of 'Radical Party' for the Brag—Quandary filly. 'Rolling Stone' for a daughter of Geologist and Activity is one of the best names of the year, and 'Sir Lancelot,' who died a holy man, is good for Sir Hugo—Remorse. 'Travel' (Mar*vel*—*Tra*vancore) is very easy and apparent—when once you have thought of it; and one more of Lord Derby's neat names is 'Weybridge' (Prince Hampton—Bridget). Another first-rate name is 'Tripod' (Suspender—Gipsy): we know how gipsies suspend their kettles. 'Up-Wind' (Upstart—Cyclone) is also to be commended. No doubt I have missed many that well deserve note; very often the point of a good name does not strike one immediately. Of course, there are many sires and dams whose offspring suggest nothing, and for which really good names are well-nigh impossible, and many names that fit admirably are taken—more or less inappropriately used—for creatures one never heard of, or has forgotten; but it is well worth bestowing time and trouble in the search for really good names.

Although I wrote last month before the decision had been given in the action of the Anti-Gambling League, that I well knew what the decision was going to be those who read my Note on the subject will have perceived. Readers are aware of the tone of this magazine, and understand that we endeavour to appeal to those who appreciate all that is best and highest in the world of sport; the baser aspects of the racecourse or football field are ignored, and certainly no one is ever recommended in these pages to make a bet. But I do loathe these 'Anti' people, who seek to interfere with the amusements of their neighbours. The sensible man does not bet—at least, he certainly does not do so habitually; but I am all for freedom of action, and if it amuses a man to do what is foolish, the idea of his being interfered with by a priggish little body of self-appointed censors is intolerable. Bench-made law, too, is a very bad thing, and it is not denied by anyone that the Act which has been lately strained was not meant to interfere with the man who believed in the excellence of his own or his friend's horse, and desired to give proof of his belief by a wager when he went to see it run. I well remember having more than once driven down with Mr. Justice Hawkins to Newmarket in a friend's fly to see races that finished in the Abingdon Mile Bottom or at the T.Y.C. post, and discussed my bets on the way, little suspecting that I was transgressing any law! With a learned judge of far higher rank than Mr. Justice Hawkins, too, I have talked over the chances of a race; he and I have arrived at the same conclusions, made the same bets with the same bookmaker—and usually, no doubt, lost our money.

Dr. Welldon, the Headmaster of Harrow, and other excellent people like him, little imagine what potent, grave, and reverend signiors have their names inscribed in the betting books of Mr. Fry and his colleagues. I have myself, indeed, executed ready-money commissions for an ex-Solicitor-General! I should like to prevent the roguish advertising tipster from earning a dishonest livelihood, and no one can have a greater contempt than I for the folly and gullibility of his victims; but I won't be coerced, and it will entertain me much to help in showing these 'Antis' how futile are their efforts. The law can be evaded in a multitude of ways. Directors of racing clubs, such as Sandown, Kempton, Hurst Park, Lingfield, Gatwick, &c., can, I fancy, easily gratify those of their subscribers who want to bet by making a sort of

supplementary club inclosure of which bookmakers can be members. I have not thought out the details of the scheme, or how those who are not members of the club proper (those who are would, of course, have access to the new inclosure) could gain admission or qualify for temporary membership, but details could be easily worked out. I see great possibilities, too, in the telephone; or if I choose to scribble on a bit of paper '10*l.* Velasquez,' what is to prevent me from handing it to a bookmaker or his clerk? There would have to be some understanding about the prices, but this could be arranged with very little difficulty if both parties to the transaction were anxious to wager. Early betting comes up 'on the tape' to all the clubs, political and social; men who do not belong to clubs would soon learn where to find the list, and they would readily fall into the habit of making any bets they wished before they went to a course; plans for altering or adding to their bets when they reached the course could easily be devised. Bookmakers, for instance, could have their carriages opposite the stands, and their customers could write down instructions and take or send them. Already there are not a few genuine amateur bookmakers in all clubs, and as it is no doubt an excellent game, a demand for more would speedily produce a supply.

I see no possible device of the 'Antis' that could not be checkmated, and the operation would be rather diverting than otherwise. It is preposterous to suppose that any law would ever be passed to make the publication of the odds in the newspapers a penal offence, for the freedom of the press is a matter which all classes (except the little body of 'Antis') vigorously support; and as even Mr. Justice Hawkins and his colleagues expressly declare that betting is not illegal, there would be no excuse for an attempt to interfere with it by a side wind. So long as there is any desire on the part of any section of readers for a knowledge of the odds, that knowledge will be conveniently obtainable. It is not more likely that telegrams about betting will be interdicted than that editors of newspapers will be edited by the 'Anti' division, and the latest betting excluded; and if such an absurd attempt were made, it would be readily defeated by codes, as I explained last month. All this looks as if I were an advocate of betting, but I am not so in the least. No one recognises more thoroughly than I do how enormous are the chances against the backer, how

remote are his prospects of winning, and particularly how mischievous a little success almost invariably is; in twenty-nine cases out of thirty the man who wins is tempted to increase his stakes, to bet higher and higher; he loses in due time, and then he makes a desperate attempt to 'get home,' with results awkward or serious, as the case may be. Betting to 'get home' is the source of half the mischief at least. A man is cautious early in the day and very likely does not bet without what seems to him a good reason (bad as it may be in reality), but to get home he will bet recklessly on anything. It is a bad game. We see bookmakers thriving in spite of their heavy expenses, but how many of our friends have we not seen hard hit or 'knocked out' altogether? I repeat, it is a very bad game, and I speak as one who has been foolish enough to play it (unsuccessfully as a very general rule) with very special and peculiar advantages in my favour. But the one thing I will not stand is to be dominated and have my freedom of action checked by prigs.

An ardent fisherman, Mr. Alfred Jardine, has sent me a list of big fish caught with rod and line in the season 1896–7, which, in most rivers, closed for 'coarse fish' on March the 15th. The specimens tabulated were weighed-in at recognised angling societies, vouched for by their secretaries, and entered in the club-books; so that all the weights, &c., as given, may really be accepted as correct. Notwithstanding that many fine fish have been caught, the past season, owing to summer droughts and winter floods, was not a very successful one, as regards sport, in some rivers and streams; but trout, including the grand *fario* of the Thames, come well to the front, and as regards these last it is satisfactory to have evidence that the Metropolitan river is efficiently watched and preserved. Many large pike have been captured, notably one at Dagenham, Essex, on November 22, 1896, that weighed 30 lb.; also a 29 lb. specimen, January 7, 1897, in a Norfolk Broad; and another on February 26, of 29 lb.; besides one of 24 lb., March 4, which, with two others of 22 lb. each, were taken in the same locality; and, since then, on almost the closing day, a 28 lb. pike was caught in the Severn, together with two of 25 lb. each in the Avon. The barbel-fishing of the Thames, Lea, and Trent was remarkably good, a considerable number, from 10½ lb. to 6½ lb., were caught, and quantities of less weight. In addition to the bream specified, numerous others,

between 5 lb. and 3 lb., were landed, also many fine chub, including a grand specimen from the Trent weighing over 7 lb. Roach were plentiful and of good size, but many 'bastard' roach, *i.e.* hybrid bream and roach, exceeding 2½ lb., were weighed-in and passed as *true* roach; some very large dace also were 'creeled' by anglers during the past season.

Here is the list :—

April, 1896.—*Trout*, from Thames : one at Staines, 9 lb. 8 oz.; Windsor, one each, 8 lb. 8 oz., 7 lb. 2 oz., 6 lb. 3 oz., 5 lb. 8 oz., 5 lb. 3 oz., 5 lb.; Marlow, 7 lb. 8 oz.; Sunbury, 7 lb. 2 oz., 6 lb.; Hampton Court, 7 lb.; Datchet, 6 lb.; Hedsor, 6 lb.; Shepperton, 5 lb. 14 oz.

May.—*Trout*: Sunbury, 9 lb., 5 lb. 8 oz., 5 lb.; Chertsey, 8 lb. 12 oz., 5 lb. 8 oz.; Shepperton, 8 lb. 8 oz., 7 lb. 12 oz., 7 lb. 8 oz., 5 lb.; Windsor, 7 lb. 12 oz., 6 lb. 6 oz.; Datchet, 8 lb., 7 lb.; Stanstead, Stort, 7 lb. 3 oz.; Lea, 5 lb.

June.—*Trout*: Thames, Boveney Weir, 8 lb. 8 oz.; Sunbury, 5 lb.; Shepperton, 7 lb. 12 oz., 6 lb. 8 oz. *Bream*: Walton, 6 lb. *Chub*: Streatley, 5 lb. *Pike*: Derwent, Yorks, 17 lb. *Barbel*: Trent, Newark, 7 lb. 12 oz., 7 lb. 8 oz., 7 lb. 6 oz.

July.—*Trout*: New River, Ware, 8 lb. 8 oz.; Thames, Shepperton, 6 lb. 12 oz.; Henley, 5 lb. 11 oz. *Barbel*: Teddington, 7 lb.; Sunbury, 7 lb. *Bream*: Kingston, 5 lb. 12 oz.; Blunham, Ivel, 5 lb. 7 oz. *Chub*: Windsor, 5 lb. 12 oz.; Marlow, 5 lb. 5 oz., 4 lb. 12 oz., 4 lb. 10 oz. *Tench*: St. Neots, Ouse, 3 lb.; *Roach*: Lea, 2 lb. *Bass*: Arundel, Sussex, several, 10 lb. to 4 lb. each.

August.—*Trout*: Barton Mills, Cambridgeshire, 5 lb. 12 oz. *Pike*: Lincolnshire, 19 lb.; Derwent, Yorks, 12 lb. *Barbel*: Thames, Teddington, 10 lb. 8 oz., 8 lb. 8 oz., 7 lb. 8 oz., 8 lb. 12 oz., 8 lb. 8 oz., 8 lb., 8 lb., 8 lb., 7 lb. 8 oz., 7 lb. 8 oz., 7 lb., 7 lb.; Henley, 8 lb. 8 oz., 7 lb.; Staines, 7 lb., 6 lb. 8 oz. *Chub*: Chertsey, 4 lb. 4 oz. *Tench*: Lincoln Fens, 3 lb. 10 oz. *Rudd*: Lincoln Fens, 3 lb. *Roach*: Norfolk, 2 lb. 4 oz.; Bures, Suffolk, 2 lb., 1 lb. 14 oz.; Lea, 1 lb. 9 oz.

September.—*Trout*: Thames, Henley, 6 lb. 8 oz. *Chub*: 5 lb. 1 oz.; *Barbel*: Windsor, 7 lb. 12 oz.; Twickenham, 7 lb. 4 oz.; Richmond, 6 lb. 12 oz.; Datchet, 6 lb.; Lea, 7 lb., 6 lb. 6 oz.; Trent, Fiskerton, 9 lb. *Perch*; Nottingham, 3 lb. 7 oz. *Tench*: Wroxham, Norfolk, 4 lb.; St. Neots, Ouse, 4 lb.

October.—*Pike*: Barton Broad, Norfolk, 19 lb., 15 lb., 13 lb.; Wroxham, 15 lb., 13 lb.; Slapton Ley, Devon, 13 lb., 11 lb., 10 lb.; Idle, Lincolnshire, 13 lb.; Thames, Sunbury, 11 lb.; Exe Canal, 10 lb. *Carp*: Thames, Twickenham, 10 lb. *Chub*: Severn, 4 lb. 4 oz. *Roach*: Arun, Sussex, 2 lb. 4 oz., 2 lb.

November.—*Pike*: Dagenham, Essex, 30 lb.; Lincoln Fens, 21 lb., 14 lb.; Witham, Lincoln, 19 lb., 18 lb.; Kelsey Drain, 14 lb.; Lea, 16 lb., 14 lb.; Gipping, Suffolk, 11 lb. 11 oz.; Stour, Suffolk, 10 lb.; Norfolk, 11 lb. 8 oz., 11 lb.; Exe Canal, 12 lb.; Thames, Henley, 10 lb. 4 oz., 10 lb. *Roach*: Tring Reservoirs, 2 lb. 2 oz., 1 lb. 15 oz., 1 lb. 12 oz.; Thames, Teddington, 2 lb., 1 lb. 11 oz.; Maldon, Essex, 1 lb. 12 oz.; Arun, Sussex, 1 lb. 12 oz. *Dace*, 15¾ oz., 14¼ oz., 13¼ oz.

December.—*Pike*: Driffield, Yorks, 20 lb. 8 oz., 11 lb. 8 oz.; Trent, Notts, 15 lb, 4 oz., 12 lb. 4 oz.; Windsor Thames, 10 lb. 12 oz. *Bream*: Norfolk, 6 lb., 5 lb. 14 oz., 5 lb. 12 oz. *Dace*: Cambridge, 1 lb. 1½ oz., 1 lb. 1½ oz, and 13½ oz.

January.— *Pike*: Norfolk Broads, 29 lb., 22 lb., 22 lb., 17 lb., 17 lb., 17 lb., 17 lb., 17 lb., 15 lb., 12 lb.; Thames, Henley, 19 lb., 14 lb. 8 oz., 14 lb., 12 lb. 8 oz., 11 lb.; Lea, 15 lb., 10 lb. 6 oz.; Leicestershire, 14 lb.; Exe Canal, 13 lb. 8 oz., 10 lb. 8 oz. *Chub*: Ivel, Bedfordshire, 4 lb. 14 oz.; Loddon, Berkshire, 4 lb. 4 oz.; Henley, Thames, 4 lb. 1 oz. *Perch*: 2 lb. 4 oz. *Roach*: Maldon, Essex, 1 lb. 12 oz.

February.—*Pike*: Norfolk, 29 lb., 24 lb., 18 lb., 16 lb., 13 lb. 8 oz., 13 lb. 8 oz., 12 lb. 1 oz., 11 lb. 8 oz., 10 lb. 10 oz., 10 lb.; Pontefract, Yorks, 22 lb.; Redford, Ouse, 20 lb., 12 lb., 10 lb.; Witham, Lincoln, 19 lb., 10 lb., 10 lb.; Thames, Henley, 16 lb., 10 lb. 6 oz., 10 lb.: Sunbury, 12 lb.; Trent, Notts, 12 lb. 8 oz., 12 lb.; Sleaford Canal, 11 lb. *Chub*: Trent, 7 lb. 1 oz.; Teme, 4 lb. 4 oz. *Carp*: Medway, 6 lb. 9 oz. *Perch*: Medway, 2 lb. 10 oz. *Roach*: Torksey, Lincoln, 2 lb.; Tring, 2 lb. 2 oz., 1 lb. 12 oz., 1 lb. 11 oz., 1 lb. 9 oz.; Lea, 1 lb. 13½ oz., 1 lb. 11¾ oz., 1 lb. 11 oz., 1 lb. 10 oz.; Ouse, 1 lb. 13 oz. *Pike*: Severn, 28 lb.; Avon, 25 lb., and 25 lb.

THE

BADMINTON MAGAZINE

June 1897

A NINETEENTH-CENTURY MIRACLE

BY E. Œ. SOMERVILLE AND MARTIN ROSS

CAPTAIN 'PAT' NAYLOR, of the —th Dragoons, had the influenza. For three days he had lain prostrate, a sodden and aching victim to the universal leveller, and an intolerable nuisance to his wife. This last is perhaps an over-statement; Mrs. Naylor was in the habit of bearing other people's burdens with excellent fortitude, but she felt justly annoyed that Captain Pat should knock up before they had fairly settled down in their new quarters, and while yet three of the horses were out of sorts after the crossing from England.

Pilot, however, was quite fit, a very tranquillising fact, and one that Mrs. Pat felt was due to her own good sense in summering him on her father's broad pastures in Meath, instead of 'lugging him to Aldershot with the rest of the string, as Pat wanted to do,' as she explained to Major Booth. Major Booth shed a friendly grin upon his fallen comrade, who lay, a deplorable object, on the horrid velvet-covered sofa peculiar to indifferent lodgings, and said vaguely that one of his brutes was right anyhow, and he was going to ride him at Carnfother the next day.

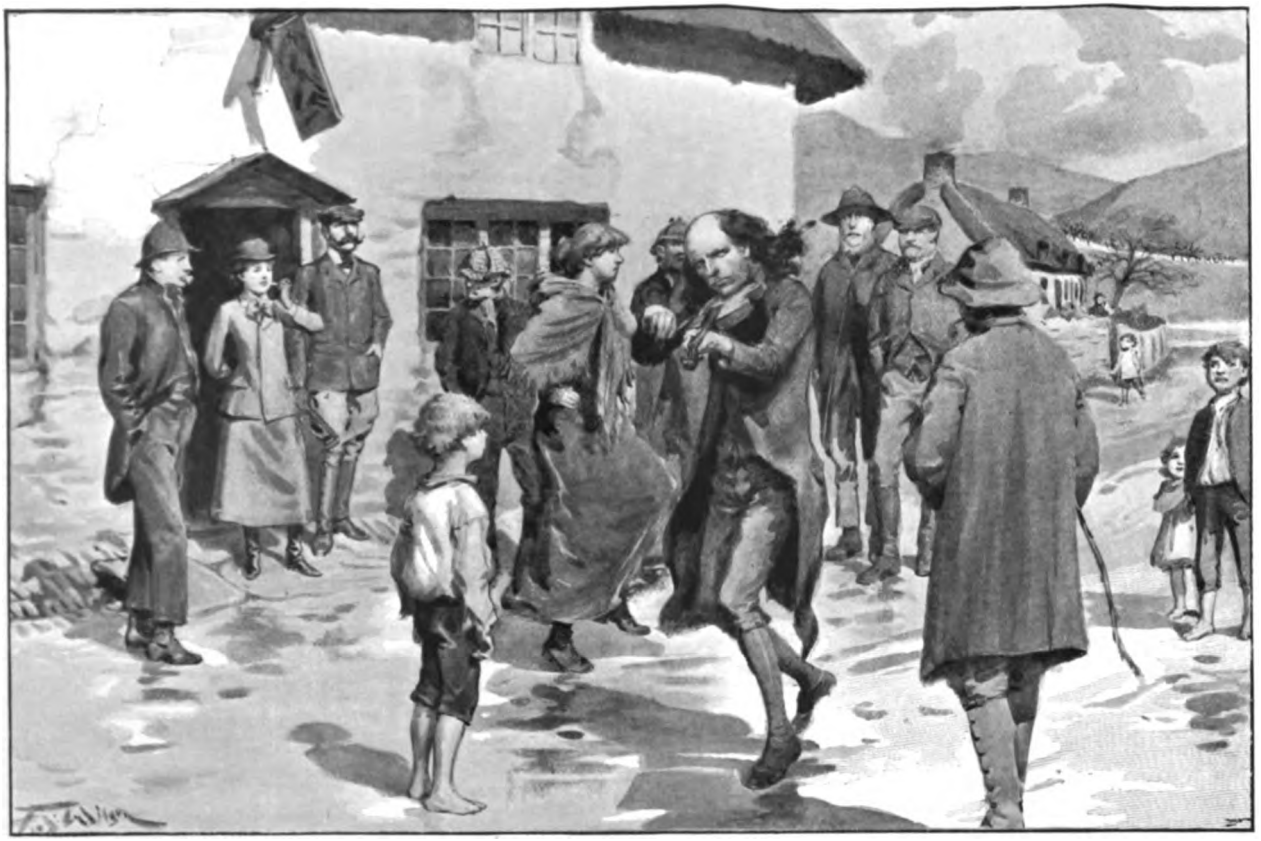
'You'd better come too, Mrs. Pat,' he added; 'and if you'll drive me I'll send my chap on with the horses. It's too far to ride. It's fourteen Irish miles off, and fourteen Irish miles is just about the longest distance I know.'

Carnfother is a village in a remote part of the Co. Cork; it possesses a small hotel—in Ireland no hostelry, however abject, would demean itself by accepting the title of inn—a police barrack, a few minor public-houses, a good many dirty cottages, and an unrivalled collection of loafers. The stretch of salmon river that gleamed away to the distant heathery hills afforded the *raison d'être* of both hotel and loafers, but the fishing season had not begun, and the attention of both was therefore undividedly bestowed on Mrs. Naylor and Major Booth. The former's cigarette and the somewhat Paradisaic dimensions of her apron skirt would indeed at any time have rivalled in interest the landing of a 20-lb. fish, and as she strode into the hotel the bystanders' ejaculatory piety would have done credit to a revival meeting.

'Well, well, I'll say nothing for her but that she's quare!' said the old landlady, hurrying in from her hens to attend to these rarer birds whom fortune had sent to her net.

Mrs. Pat's roan cob had attacked and defeated the fourteen Irish miles with superfluous zeal, and there were still several minutes before the hounds could be reasonably expected on the scene. The soda was bad, the whisky was worse. The sound of a fiddle came in with the sunshine through the open door, and our friends strolled out into the street to see what was going on. In the centre of a ring of onlookers an old man was playing, and was, moreover, dancing to his own music, and dancing with serious, incongruous elegance. Round and round the circle he footed it, his long thin legs twinkling in absolute accord with the complicated jig that his long thin fingers were ripping out of the cracked and raucous fiddle. A very plain, stout young woman, with a heavy red face and discordantly golden hair, shuffled round after him in a clumsy pretence of dancing, and as the couple faced Mrs. Pat she saw that the old man was blind. Steam was rising from his domed bald head, and his long black hair danced on his shoulders. His face was pale and strange and entirely self-absorbed. Had Mrs. Pat been in the habit of instituting romantic parallels between the past and the present she might have thought of the Priests of Baal who danced in probably just such measures round the cromlechs in the hills above Carnfother; as she wasn't, she remarked merely that this was all very well, but that the old maniac would have to clear out of that before they brought Pilot round, or there'd be trouble.

There was trouble, but it did not arise from Pilot, but from the yellow-haired woman's pertinacious demands for money from



AN OLD MAN WAS PLAYING

Mrs. Naylor. She had the offensive fluency that comes of long practice in alternate wheedling and bullying, and although Major Booth had given her a shilling she continued to pester Mrs. Pat for a further largesse. But, as it happened, Mrs. Pat's purse was in her covert coat in the dog-cart, and Mrs. Pat's temper was ever within easy reach, and on being too closely pressed for the one she exhibited the other with a decision that contracted the ring of bystanders to hear the fun, and loosened the yellow-haired woman's language, till unfortunate Major Booth felt that if he could get her off the field of battle for a sovereign it would be cheap at the price. The old man continued to walk round and round, fingering a dumb tune on his fiddle that he did not bow, while the sunlight glistened hot and bright in his unwinking eyes; there was a faint smile on his lips, he heard as little as he saw; it was evident that he was away where 'beyond these voices there is peace,' in the fairy country that his forefathers called the Tir na'n Oge.

At this juncture the note of the horn sounded very sweetly from across the shining ford of the river. Hounds and riders came splashing up into the village street, the old man and his daughter were hustled to one side, and Mrs. Pat's affability returned as she settled her extremely smart little person on Pilot's curvetting back, and was instantly aware that there was nothing present that could touch either of them in looks or quality. Carnfother was at the extreme verge of the D—— Hounds' country; there were not more than about thirty riders out, and Mrs. Pat was not far wrong when she observed to Major Booth that there was not much class about them. Of the four or five women who were of the field, but one wore a habit with any pretensions to conformity with the sacred laws of fashion, and its colour was a blue that, taken in connection with a red, brass-buttoned waistcoat, reminded the severe critic from Royal Meath of the head porter at the Shelburne Hotel. So she informed Major Booth in one of the rare intervals permitted to her by Pilot for conversation.

'All right,' responded that gentleman, 'you wait until you and that ramping brute of yours get up among the stone walls, and you'll be jolly glad if she'll call a cab for you and see you taken safe home. I tell you what—you won't be able to see the way she goes.'

'Rubbish!' said Mrs. Pat, and, whether from sympathy or from a petulant touch of her heel, Pilot at this moment involved himself in so intricate a series of plunges and bucks as to preclude further discussion.

The first covert – a small wood on the flank of a hill—was blank, and the hounds moved on across country to the next draw. It was a land of pasture, and in every fence was a deep muddy passage, through which the field splashed in single file with the grave stolidity of the cows by whom the gaps had been made. Mrs. Pat was feeling horribly bored. Her escort had joined himself to two of the ladies of the hunt, and though it was gratifying to observe that one wore a paste brooch in her tie and the other had an imitation cavalry bit and bridle, with a leather tassel hanging from her pony's throat, these things lost their savour when she had no one with whom to make merry over them. She had left her sandwiches in the dog-cart, her servant had mistaken sherry for whisky when he was filling her flask; the day had clouded over, and already one brief but furious shower had scourged the curl out of her dark fringe and made the reins slippery.

At last, however, a nice-looking gorse covert was reached, and the hounds threw themselves into it with promising alacrity. Pilot steadied himself, and stood with pricked ears, giving an occasional snatch at his bit, and looking, as no one knew better than his rider, the very picture of a hunter, while he listened for the first note that should tell of a find. He had not long to wait. There came a thin little squeal from the middle of the covert, and a hound flung up out of the thicker gorse and began to run along a ridge of rock, with head down, and feathering stern.

'They've got him, my lady,' said a young farmer on a rough three-year-old to Mrs. Pat, as he stuffed his pipe in his pocket. 'That's Patience; we'll have a hunt out o' this.'

Then came another and longer squeal as Patience plunged out of sight again, and then, as the glowing chorus rose from the half-seen pack, a whip, posted on a hillside beyond the covert, raised his cap high in the air, and a wild screech that set Pilot dancing from leg to leg broke from a country boy who was driving a harrow in the next field: 'Ga—aane awa—ay!'

Mrs. Pat forgot her annoyances. Her time had come. She would show that idiot Booth that Pilot was not to be insulted with impunity, and—— but here retrospect and intention became alike merged in the present, and in the single resolve to get ahead and stay there. Half a dozen of Pilot's great reaching strides, and she was in the next field and over the low bank without putting an iron on it. The horse with the harrow, deserted by his driver, was following the hunt with the best of

them, and, combining business with pleasure, was, as he went, harrowing the field with absurd energy. The Paste Brooch and the Shelburne Porter—so Mrs. Pat mentally distinguished them—were sailing along with a good start, and Major Booth was close at their heels. The light soil of the tilled field flew in every direction as thirty or more horses raced across it, and the usual retinue of foot runners raised an ecstatic yell as Mrs. Pat forged ahead and sent her big horse over the fence at the end of the field in a style that happily combined swagger with knowledge.

The hounds were streaking along over a succession of pasture fields, and the cattle gaps which were to be found in every fence vexed the proud soul of Mrs. Pat. She was too good a sportsman to school her horse over needless jumps when hounds were running, but it infuriated her to have to hustle with these outsiders for her place at a gap. So she complained to Major Booth, with a vehemence of adjective that, though it may be forgiven to her, need not be set down here.

'Is *all* the wretched country like this?' she inquired indignantly, as the Shelburne Porter's pony splashed ahead of her through a muddy ford, just beyond which the hounds had momentarily checked; 'you told me to bring out a big-jumped horse, and I might have gone the whole hunt on a bicycle!'

Major Booth's reply was to point to the hounds. They had cast back to the line that they had flashed over, and had begun to run again at right angles from the grassy valley down which they had come, up towards the heather-clad hills that lay back of Carnfother.

'Say your prayers, Mrs. Pat!' he said, in what Mrs. Pat felt to be a gratuitously offensive manner, 'and I'll ask the lady in the pretty blue habit to have an eye to you. This is a hill fox and he's going to make you and Pilot sit up!'

Mrs. Pat was not in a mood to be trifled with, and I again think it better to omit her response to this inconvenient jesting. What she did was to give Pilot his head, and she presently found herself as near the hounds as was necessary, galloping in a line with the huntsman straight for a three-foot wall, lightly built of round stones. That her horse could refuse to jump it was a possibility that did not so much as enter her head; but that he did so was a fact whose stern logic could not be gainsaid. She had too firm a seat to be discomposed by the swinging plunge with which he turned from it, but her mental balance sustained a serious shake. That Pilot, at the head of the hunt, should refuse, was a thing that struck at the root of her dearest beliefs.

She stopped him and turned him at the wall again; again he refused, and at the same instant Major Booth and the blue habit jumped it side by side.

'What did I tell you!' the former called back, with a laugh that grated on Mrs. Pat's ear with a truly fiendish rasp; 'do you want a lead?'

The incensed Mrs. Pat once more replied in forcible phraseology, as she drove her horse again at the wall. The average Meath horse likes stones just about as much as the average Co. Cork horse enjoys water, and the train of running men and boys were given the exquisite gratification of a contest between Pilot and his rider.

'Howld on, miss, till I knock a few shtones for ye!' volunteered one, trying to interpose between Pilot and the wall.

'Get out of the way!' was Mrs. Pat's response to this civility, as she crammed her steed at the jump again. The volunteer, amid roars of laughter from his friends, saved his life only by dint of undignified agility, as the big horse whirled round, rearing and plunging.

'Isn't he the divil painted?' exclaimed another in highest admiration; 'wait till I give him a couple of slaps of my bawneen, miss!' He dragged off his white flannel coat and attacked Pilot in the rear with it, while another of the party flung clods of mud vaguely into the battle, and another persistently implored the maddened Mrs. Pat to get off and let him lead the horse over, 'before she'd lose her life:' a suggestion that has perhaps a more thoroughly exasperating effect than any other on occasions such as this.

By the time that Pilot had pawed down half the wall and been induced to buck over, or into, what remained of it, Mrs. Pat's temper was irretrievably gone, and she was at the heel instead of the head of the hunt. Thanks to this position there was bestowed on her the abhorred, but not to be declined, advantage of availing herself of the gaps made in the next couple of jumps by the other riders; but the stones that they had kicked down were almost as agitating to Pilot's ruffled nerves as those that still remained in position. She found it the last straw that she should have to wait for the obsequious runners to tear these out of her way, while the galloping backs in front of her grew smaller and smaller, and the adulatory condolences of her assistants became more and more hard to endure. She literally hurled the shilling at them as she set off once more to try to recover her lost ground, and by sheer force of passion hustled Pilot over the next broken-

down wall without a refusal. For she had now got into that stony country whereof Major Booth had spoken. Rough heathery fields, ribbed with rocks and sown with grey boulders, were all round. The broad salmon river swept sleekly through the valley below, among the bland green fields which were as far away for all practical purposes as the plains of Paradise. No one who has not ridden a stern chase over rough ground on a well-bred horse with his temper a bit out of hand will be able at all fitly to sympathise with the trials of Mrs. Naylor. The hunt and all that appertained to it had sunk out of sight over a rugged hill-side, and she had nothing by which to steer her course save the

MRS. PAT'S TEMPER WAS IRRETRIEVABLY GONE

hoof marks in the occasional black and boggy intervals between the heathery knolls. No one had ever accused her of being short of pluck, and she pressed on her difficult way with the utmost gallantry; but short of temper she certainly was, and at each succeeding obstacle there ensued a more bitter battle between her and her horse. Every here and there a band of crisp upland meadow would give the latter a chance, but each such advantage would be squandered in the war dance that he indulged in at every wall.

At last the summit of the interminable series of hills was gained, and Mrs. Pat scanned the solitudes that surrounded her with wrathful eyes. The hounds were lost, as completely swal-

lowed up as ever were Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Not the most despised of the habits or the feeblest of the three-year-olds had been left behind to give a hint of their course; but the hoof-marks showed black on a marshy down-grade of grass, and with an angry clout of her crop on Pilot's unaccustomed ribs, she set off again. A narrow road cut across the hills at the end of the field. The latter was divided from it by a low, thin wall of sharp slaty stones, and on the farther side there was a wide and boggy drain. It was not a nice place, and Pilot thundered down towards it at a pace that suited his rider's temper better than her judgment. It was evident, at all events, that he did not mean to refuse. Nor did he; he rose out of the heavy ground at the wall like a rocketing pheasant, and cleared it by more than twice its height; but though he jumped high he did not jump wide, and he landed half in and half out of the drain, with his forefeet clawing at its greasy edge, and his hind legs deep in the black mud.

Mrs. Pat scrambled out of the saddle with the speed of light, and after a few momentous seconds, during which it seemed horribly likely that the horse would relapse bodily into the drain, his and Mrs. Pat's efforts prevailed, and he was standing, trembling and dripping, on the narrow road. She led him on for a few steps; he went sound, and for one delusive instant she thought he had escaped damage; then, through the black slime on his hind legs the red blood began to flow. It came from high up inside the off hind leg, above the hock, and it welled ever faster and faster, a plaited crimson stream that made his owner's heart sink. She dipped her handkerchief in the ditch and cleaned the cut. It was deep in the fleshy part of the leg, a gaping wound, inflicted by one of those razor slates that hide like sentient enemies in such boggy places. It was large enough for her to put her hand in; she held the edges together, and the bleeding ceased for an instant; then, as she released them, it began again worse than ever. Her handkerchief was as inadequate for any practical purpose as ladies' handkerchiefs generally are, but an inspiration came to her. She tore off her gloves, and in a few seconds the long linen hunting-scarf that had been pinned and tied with such skilled labour in the morning was being used as a bandage for the wound. But though Mrs. Pat could tie a tie with any man in the regiment, she failed badly as a bandager of a less ornamental character. The hateful stream continued to pump forth from the cut, incarnadining the muddy road, and in despair she took Pilot by the head and began to lead him down the hill towards the valley.

Another gusty shower flung itself at her. It struck her bare white neck with whips of ice, and though she turned up the collar of her coat, the rain ran down under the neckband of her shirt and chilled her through and through. It was evident that an artery had been cut in Pilot's leg; the flow from the wound never ceased; the hunting-scarf, drenched with blood, had slipped down to the hock. It seemed to Mrs. Pat that her horse must bleed to death, and, tough and unemotional though she was,

MRS. PAT SCRAMBLED OUT OF THE SADDLE

Pilot was very near her heart; tears gathered in her eyes as she led him slowly on through the rain and the loneliness, in the forlorn hope of finding help. She progressed in this lamentable manner for perhaps half a mile; the rain ceased, and she stopped to try once more to readjust the scarf, when in the stillness that had followed the cessation of the rain, she heard a faint and distant sound of music. It drew nearer, a thin, shrill twittering, and as Mrs. Pat turned quickly from her task to see what this could portend, she heard a woman's voice say harshly:

'Ah, have done with that thrash of music; sure, it'll be dark night itself before we're in to Lismore.'

There was something familiar in the coarse tones. The weirdness fell from the wail of the music as Mrs. Pat remembered the woman who had bothered her for money that morning in Carnfother. She and the blind old man were tramping slowly up the road, seemingly as useless a couple to anyone in Mrs. Pat's plight as could well be imagined.

'How far am I from Carnfother?' she asked, as they drew near to her. 'Is there any house near here?'

'There is not,' said the yellow-haired woman; 'and ye're four miles from Carnfother yet.'

'I'll pay you well if you will take a message there for me ——' began Mrs. Pat.

'Are ye sure have ye yer purse in yer pocket?' interrupted the yellow-haired woman with a laugh that succeeded in being as nasty as she wished; 'or will I go dancin' down to Carnfother ——'

'Have done, Joanna!' said the old man suddenly; 'what trouble is on the lady? What lamed the horse?'

He turned his bright blind eyes full on Mrs. Pat. They were of the curious green blue that is sometimes seen in the eyes of a grey collie, and with all Mrs. Pat's dislike and suspicion of the couple, she knew that he was blind.

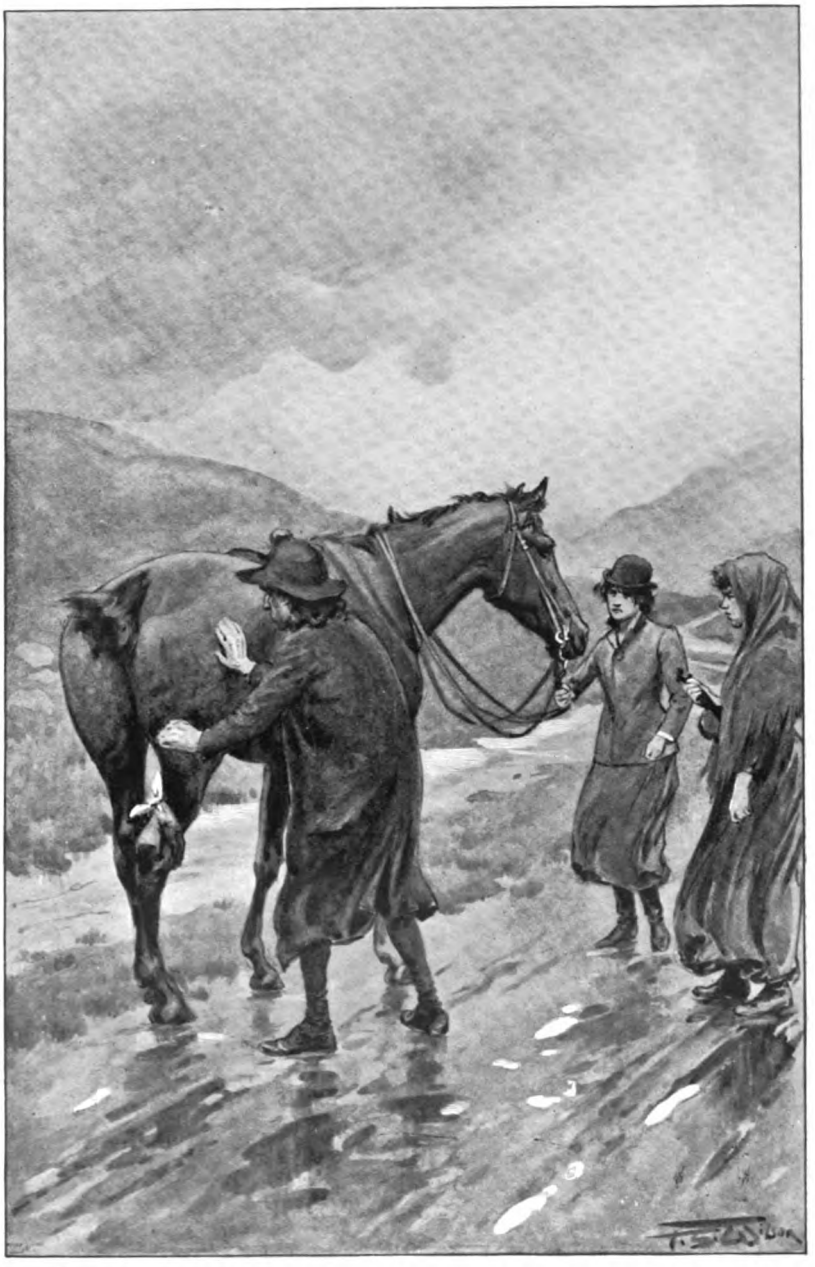
'He was cut in a ditch,' she said shortly.

The old man had placed his fiddle in his daughter's hands; his own hands were twitching and trembling.

'I feel the blood flowing,' he said in a very low voice, and he walked up to Pilot.

His hands went unguided to the wound, from which the steady flow of blood had never ceased. With one he closed the lips of the cut, while with the other he crossed himself three times. His daughter watched him stolidly; Mrs. Pat, with a certain alarm, having, after the manner of her kind, explained to herself the incomprehensible with the all-embracing formula of madness. Yes, she thought, he was undoubtedly mad, and as soon as the paroxysm was past she would have another try at bribing the woman.

The old man was muttering to himself, still holding the wound in one hand. Mrs. Pat could distinguish no words, but it seemed to her that he repeated three times what he was saying. Then he straightened himself and stroked Pilot's quarter with a light, pitying hand. Mrs. Pat stared. The bleeding had ceased.



HIS HANDS WENT UNGUIDED TO THE WOUND

The hunting-scarf lay on the road at the horse's empurpled hoof. There was nothing to explain the mystery, but the fact remained.

'He'll do now,' said the blind man. 'Take him on to Carnfother; but ye'll want to get five stitches in that to make a good job of it.'

'But—I don't understand——' stammered Mrs. Pat, shaken for once out of her self-possession by this sudden extension of her spiritual horizon; 'what have you done? Won't it begin again?' She turned to the woman in her bewilderment: 'Is—is he mad?'

'For as mad as he is, it's him you may thank for yer horse,' answered the yellow-haired woman. 'Why, Holy Mother! did ye never hear of Kane the Blood-Healer?'

The road round them was suddenly thronged with hounds, snuffing at Pilot, and pushing between Mrs. Pat and the fence. The cheerful familiar sound of the huntsman's voice rating them made her feel her feet on solid ground again. In a moment Major Booth was there, the Master had dismounted, the habits, loud with sympathy and excitement, had gathered round; a Whip was examining the cut, while he spoke in a low voice to the yellow-haired woman.

Mrs. Pat, tie-less, her face splashed with mud, her bare hands stained with blood, told her story. It is, I think, a point in her favour that for the moment she forgot what her appearance must be.

'The horse would have bled to death before the lady got to Carnfother, sir,' said the Whip to the Master; 'it isn't the first time I seen life saved by that one. Sure, didn't I see him heal a man that got his leg in a mowing machine, and he half dead, with the blood spouting out of him like two rainbows!'

This is not a fairy story. Neither need it be set lightly down as a curious coincidence. I know the charm that the old man said. I cannot give it here. It will only work successfully if taught by man to woman or by woman to man; nor do I pretend to say that it will work for everyone. I believe it to be a personal and wholly incomprehensible gift, but that such a gift has been bestowed, and in more parts of Ireland than one, is a bewildering and indisputable fact.

SOME CRICKET YARNS

BY W. J. FORD

WHATEVER a man's favourite sport may be, and whatever his favourite implement—bat, cue, gun, rod, or what not—there is one truly English weapon with which most men are adept, viz. that good long-bow which Locksley's grandsire drew at Hastings; and notwithstanding the disrepute into which sporting stories, notably 'fish-stories,' have fallen, society ought to be grateful, I maintain, to the man who, having a good foundation laid for a yarn, builds up on it a pleasing superstructure of fiction, or, as Pooh-Bah delicately phrases it, 'adds artistic verisimilitude to a hitherto bald and unconvincing narrative.' However, in the cricket yarns which follow, I only propose to jot down a few of the amusing or curious incidents which have come under my own notice during some five-and-twenty years' experience of all classes of cricket, or which are so fully and completely authenticated as to leave no doubt as to their accuracy. If any reader finds them too tough, he must throw the 'Badminton' aside, and, Dogberry-like, 'thank God that he is rid of a knave!' But for all that they are true.

One is often asked, 'What is the most curious thing you ever saw in the cricket-field?' I generally quote the following occurrence. Round the Devonshire Park ground at Eastbourne is a

row of standards for the electric lighting, each about twenty-five feet high, and surmounted with a globe, perhaps eighteen inches in diameter. A. S. Francis, while playing on that ground, made a particularly nice leg-hit—there were leg-hits in those days—broke one of these globes, and completely wrecked the apparatus; whereupon cheers arose and laughter, and the secretary looked a little glum at the prospect of the bill. But the very next year the very same batsman broke the very same globe with a precisely similar stroke, and, as far as I know, the feat of breaking one has never been performed before or since. To the professional story-teller there are here some grand openings for embellishment, but I refrain from doing more than stating a bare fact.

In the M.C.C. *v.* Leicestershire match, played at Lord's in 1889, Shacklock, who was quite a fast bowler, twice hit the wicket without removing a bail; each time the wicket-keeper appealed for a catch, which was most properly disallowed by the umpire, to whom, I hold, great credit is due for his careful watchfulness; but a stranger thing was to occur. H. Arnall-Thompson, the Leicestershire captain, was batting; a ball, as delivered by the bowler, ran up his bat, and striking him sharply on the eyebrow, momentarily stunned him. When he recovered, he put his hand to his injured brow, and, finding blood on it, proposed to have the wound dressed and resume his innings; whereupon we had to break it gently to the wounded warrior that the ball had rebounded from his eyebrow to the hands of the bowler, and that he was out—c. and b.!

There are many men who have been known to cavil at an umpire's decision, especially when the question is one of leg-before. Yet it should be known to the world that one man at least has been satisfied. What happened was this. A loud appeal for l.b.w. was answered by 'Out.' 'What?' cried the batsman, in the largest capitals. 'Out, sir.' The victim held up his bat in the orthodox fashion for taking 'block,' and asked, 'What's that?' 'Middle and off, sir.' 'Then I'm blowed if I wasn't out;' and he shouldered his bat and stumped off to the pavilion in high good-humour.

Here is an umpire story which raises the interesting metaphysical question as to what a 'decision' is. The question and answer were instantaneous. 'How's that? Not out. Damn it, I meant to say "Out!"', with a vigorous slap on the thigh at the expletive. We tried—I was on the fielding side—to persuade the umpire that a slip of the tongue was not a 'decision' within the meaning of the act, but he would have none of it, though he

was profusely apologetic, and, I may add, a very good umpire to boot, so the batsman went on. After about a quarter of an hour, however, conscience smote him, and he deliberately hit his wickets—but why so late?

'Pride must have a fall,' but seldom did pride fall lower or harder than in the following instance. I was once connected with a country club which was remarkably strong—in fact, the terror of the neighbourhood, especially in the case of a very weak local village, to which we had administered a series of such dreadful drubbings in successive years that on receiving another challenge we suggested our second eleven. Not a bit of it. 'We're coming over strong, and wish to meet your best side.' They came, they batted, they were dismissed for 28, and we went to the wickets, confronted by an imported bowler, who was to make hares of us. His first eight overs realised 73 runs, all run out, which must be something like a record. In all we took 404 runs, and dismissed the enemy at the second attempt for 14! A note in our score-book records, 'Trafford Park asked to meet our best side: they did.'

Apropos of putting the other side in, the following is an instructive case. A side had to journey from Eastbourne to Portsmouth by the 6.30 A.M. train—one of them appearing, by the way, in slippers, trousers, night-dress, coat, and cap, just as the 6.30 was on the move. Reaching their destination by 11 o'clock, and finding the foemen absent, the visitors had plenty of time for a little loose practice in batting and catching, and an hour later the enemy appeared, won the toss, and put the other side in on a perfect wicket. Result: the visitors scored over 300, and dismissed five men for 2 runs! A delicately-worded question elicited the fact that we had been sent in to bat because we should probably be stiff and fagged after our journey. That fatal hour, 11 to 12, had made all the difference, however.

Years ago the crowd at the Oval was not as highly educated in matters cricketical as it is now, and was often known to applaud loudly when a bump-ball went sharply into a fieldsman's hands; and hereby hangs a tale. A friend of mine, playing against a Scotch school, hit a ball hard on to the ground, and it bounded straight to point, whereupon my friend remarked blandly to the wicket-keeper, 'Hout at the Hoval!' 'Yes, and it's "hout" here, too;' and so it was, and he had to go. And yet another friend had an experience at a Scotch school, where one of the boys was acting as umpire. Seeing that the non-striker was backing up too much, my friend, the bowler for the nonce, pre-

tended to bowl, but knocked the wicket down at his own end with a loud 'How's that?' 'Well, it's out really; but it's dirty snivelling; and you're a sneak; and I shall give it "Not-out."' The gratuitous statement in the third clause—I regret that the *ipsissimum verbum* is unprintable—is too delicious.

Batsmen have their little weaknesses like the rest of creation, and I have heard a man call out to a friend in the pavilion to send out 'My light, cutting bat' when a fast bowler was put on. But I was nonplussed once when a man came in with a curious excrescence on the back of his bat. Inquiry elicited the fact that the excrescence was a hollow piece of wood, loaded with lead and fitted with a screw; it was to be removed when a fast bowler was performing, and to be retained when slows were on. Batsman's score—0, as was anticipated.

What is the umpire to do if a real 'stinger' comes his way? I once saw poor Charley Brampton, of Notts renown, solve the question. He caught the ball beautifully—it was his only chance of salvation—threw it to the boundary, and told the other umpire to call 'Four,' which was done! Good equity, but doubtful law. Brampton was fairly caught once, however, as on calling the third consecutive no-ball his verdict was impugned by the fact that the bowler turned round and held up the undelivered ball in triumph. Charley had been a little too previous. He was not an infallible umpire, but a decision he once gave requires confirmation. He called 'Wide!' The batsman struck the ball, and was caught at third man. Brampton gave him not-out on the ground that a ball called 'wide' *was* 'wide,' and that the batsman (who had proved by his action that the ball was not 'wide') could not be out of it, except by being run out. A note on the point might be a useful addition to the laws of cricket.

Personally I am always anxious to agree with the umpire; it is good policy in the end to believe, as a famous cricketer has said, that 'the umpire is always right;' it saves much heart-burning; but I confess to having been a good deal disgusted on one occasion. Our local eleven had a fairly jealous and certainly weaker rival in a neighbouring town, which, smarting under a dreadful defeat, appeared on our ground for the return match with four professionals specially chartered from Lord's. Soon after the match started I ran a short run, and before the wicket-keeper, who had broken the wicket, could appeal—perhaps even before the wicket was broken—the umpire chucked up his hat and shouted 'Out! Hurrah!' The compliment was great, but there the matter stayed.

I have been reserving to the end what I consider the champion story; it illustrates two things—the instantaneous nature of thought, and the infinite possibilities of invention or imagination. It is absolutely true, as it has been given me in the same terms from three independent persons who were witnesses of the incident, one of them being 'that fool Jones.' A certain county was playing Surrey at the Oval in the days when boundaries were not. One of the two non-Surrey batsmen was a man who was a fine maker of hits and a finer maker of excuses. He was bowled out, neck and heels, by Southerton, and as he walked towards the pavilion his own side edged towards the gangway to hear what excuse he would have to make. When he reached the doorway someone oilily and sympathetically asked him, 'How did that happen, old fellow?'

'Beastliest luck in the world! The ball was a half-volley, as rank a half-volley as ever was bowled, and I said to myself, "I'll step out and hit that ball for five." Just then I looked to the other end; there was that fool Jones staring about him, not attending to the game, and not ready to run. It was no use my hitting it, so I played back, and got bowled. Never had such infernal luck in all my life!'

The following story is curious, but not, I believe, unique. Years ago, on a very bad wicket and in a very rustic match, there were playing on the same side my brother, an uncle, a cousin, and myself. The other side had two full innings, and every one of the twenty wickets that fell was captured by one or two of the four, the bowlers being my brother and myself, the uncle and cousin doing all the stumping and catching; so that one monosyllabic name alone appeared against the enemy's batsmen. Nor, as far as I can remember, did the other members of our side have any chance of distinguishing themselves in the field.

One story from New Zealand, and I have finished. I once captained a team for an inter-provincial match at Wellington, and a rattling good team it was, but from start to finish everything went wrong. A roughish trip by steamer did not agree with everybody; nobody seemed able to play a yorker; our best bowler hurt his finger and was entirely disabled, and the wicket-keeper followed suit. Hence we were dreadfully beaten by an innings and about 180 runs. Before starting from home we had been a little over-confident in our powers and our estimate of them, and when the steamer was made fast to the wharf we found that, in lieu of a brake to take us to the town, an enemy, in the disguise of a friend, had sent a *hearse* to meet us! Perhaps we deserved the sarcasm.

SAILING IN SMALL YACHTS

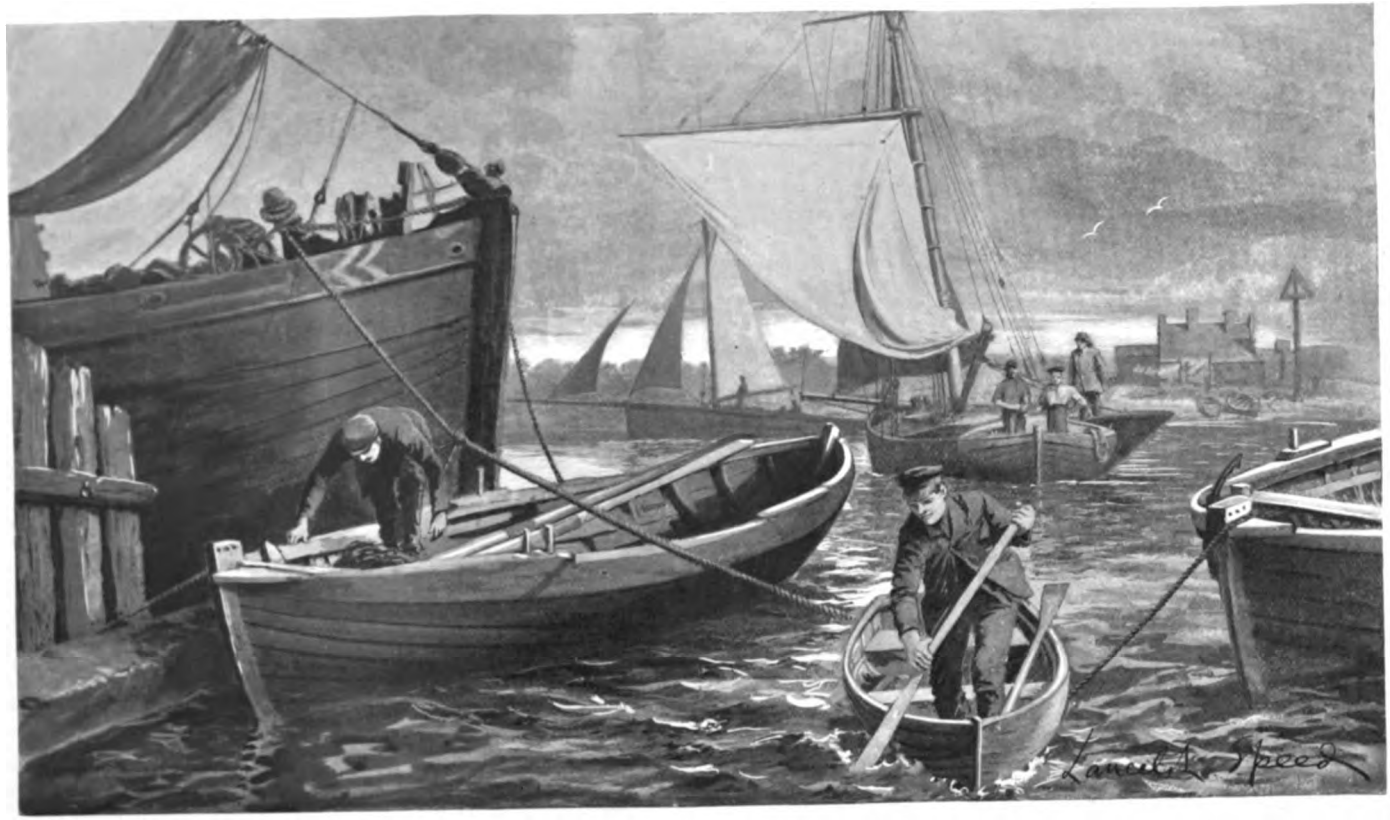
BY MAUDE SPEED

WHILE so many ladies in our happy *fin-de-siècle* days have found out the delights and excitement of sailing in small yachts for *racing* purposes, and have proved that they can steer a boat to victory with the best of masculine rivals, I always wonder that more do not join the ranks of those who *cruise*—who live on board for the whole of their annual holiday from home duties and the routine of daily shore life, make their boat their floating home, enter into the spirit of the sea, and, leaving 'society' ways behind with 'society' hats and dresses, dinners and parades, and conventional 'society' chatter, live a new and fresh life for the time being, watch the sea-birds feeding their young on the mud flats at dawn, see the moon set and the sun rise at odd hours generally passed in sleep, and, in fact, have a real and thorough change from ordinary life. Of course there are many so constituted that they are miserable in any but accustomed paths, but there are others who delight in getting away from them; and to such a holiday on a small yacht affords infinite attractions. I fancy many are deterred from it by the idea that yachting, in however humble a way, is a very expensive amusement; but this is not the case. I am not referring to the keeping of large yachts with regular crews of paid hands, for they are indeed toys only for the wealthy, but to boats of from 3 to 20 tons. The average cost of a good (second-hand) 10-tonner is 350*l.*; often you can pick one up for less; men's wages are from 1*l.* to 30*s.* a week, and they always cater for themselves. Nothing very ruinous, you see. Then if you are less ambitious and do not care to own a yacht, you can hire a comfortable 10-tonner for about 20*l.* a month, with two competent hands. Two ladies could have a very good time on such a boat; so could a lady with father, brother, or

husband, and one paid hand; or in a smaller boat without any aid: but then the owner himself must be thoroughly up to his work, and the lady be able to give efficient help and to undertake all the duties of cook and steward.

The next question would be where to go, and that is an important one, for it is very requisite in a small boat to get into snug anchorage at night, where you will not be thrown out of your little berth should it come on to blow, where the tea-things will not be upset on the floor just as they are ready, and where there will be no possibility of (between ourselves) 'a kind of a feeling That you never were meant for the sea' coming over you. Many people who do not mind being tossed about when dancing along in the open air succumb to the rolling when at anchor and down in the cabin!

But fortunately our island shores abound with sheltered anchorages and harbours from which to cruise during the day and to which to return at night. First there is the Solent, that perfect piece of water for small yachts, unequalled even by the Bosphorus and Sea of Marmora, though they run it very close; then Poole and Chichester harbours, both beloved by the artist and wild-fowler and capacious enough to afford scope for weeks of exploring and sailing; then the numerous creeks and estuaries of Devonshire and the tamer and still more sheltered Norfolk Broads; and if you are a little more capable of going further afield, the West coast of Scotland is open to you, and the much less known and consequently more interesting coast of Ireland, the north of which appears particularly inviting with its sheltered loughs. I am hoping for the spare time to come some day in which to explore those of Belfast, Foyle, Swilly, and Mulroy. One would run cautiously along the English and Irish coasts from one port to another, watching the glass and picking one's weather, as it does not do to be caught out in the open in a heavy gale in a 4-tonner with only two people on board—and one of those a woman! This same 4-tonner and crew, though, spent two months a year or two ago in investigating that other Paradise of small yachts, the Dutch rivers and canals and the Zuyder Zee, crossing the Channel in fine weather and running along the French coast from place to place. During the whole of that cruise there was no hardship or difficulty experienced anywhere, the only irksome part of the business being the perpetual cooking of meals and cleaning up, which might be avoided by taking a lad to do it all if the boat were a shade larger, and therefore capable of accommodating him. Of course one must not



A SNUG ANCHORAGE

consider rising at any hour after 2 A.M. to catch the tide, going without afternoon tea and such trifles, as hardships; they must be looked upon as part of the play, and tend to mark the fact that one is off the beaten track. To make your boat a really comfortable little floating home, you cannot be too particular about neatness, and the desirability of having 'a place for everything, and everything in its place.' Very many people make themselves perfectly wretched on board by leaving all ideas of neatness and order behind them. I have seen boats that have been pandemoniums of dirt and disorder. Nothing is made fast, everything gets turned topsy-turvy in the first turn to windward and remains so ever afterwards. In fact, there are those who seem to think that 'being at sea' should be made the excuse for chaos and discomfort in everything, and things are allowed to pass muster on a small yacht that would not be tolerated for a moment in the owner's house. I once went on board a 20-tonner to dine off Cowes, and though there were two hands on board to wash up, the forks and spoons and even the plates looked so suspiciously greasy that I was constrained to give them a surreptitious polish with the tablecloth before I could use them. On another yacht where there were two hands, and things ought therefore to have been served nicely and in order, after a long morning's sailing, when lunch-time arrived, our host informed us he had only 'rough ship fare' to offer us, and this consisted of a tin of dry corned beef, a stale loaf, and a wretched dry piece of cheese that had moreover been careering in a paperless state round and round the provision locker (as the boat pitched), and had to be dusted before it was placed on the table. And yet our friend is a great epicure on shore, and thinks nothing of spending a guinea on his dinner at a London restaurant. No wonder that he 'soon gets tired of yachting.' Food is—alas for poor humanity!—a very important matter everywhere and especially on a yachting cruise; for after a long day's sailing with only a 'stand-up' luncheon in the middle of the day, one is apt to develop a ravenous appetite, and a good 'square meal' is required. I always prefer to have tea myself, as you seldom get any in the afternoon, and therefore crave for that refreshing beverage when you come to anchor. If you have two paraffin stoves side by side and well fixed so that they cannot shift about when the boat is rolling, you will find that while your kettle is boiling on one you can have a saucepan on the other containing a tin of soup, some water, sliced onions, carrots, and potatoes, and slices of meat; thus giving you two courses – soup, and a very respectable hash; or a frying-pan with beefsteak.

tomatoes and sliced potatoes could replace it the next evening; or, for another dinner, pork chops and sliced potatoes fried together, and some apple-sauce made in a little saucepan, and put on the stove when the kettle comes off and the tea is drawing. I do not advise the cooking of large joints on board even if you have an oven, but when you buy your joint send round to the local baker's, having previously ascertained what time he bakes, and provided him with a tin and some peeled potatoes to bake round the meat. He will bake it beautifully, and will send it down to the quay at a certain hour swathed in cloths and thick brown paper, so that you can meet it and row it off, hot, for 1 o'clock dinner. It generally comes out of the oven about 12·30. This must be when you are having a morning at anchor; but once your joint is cooked, you can hash, curry, mince, or warm it up as you like best. Jellies, blancmanges, and stewed fruits are some of the quickly made delicacies you can have on board, but the two former must of course be made one day to be eaten the next.

And now let me say a word or two on the subject of dress —a very important matter, for the boat wardrobe is small, and no unnecessary article must be taken. It is absolutely imperative to comfort that the clothes should be made so as to enable you to move about with absolute freedom—loose and boneless. Serge skirts and blouses are the most comfortable, and a knitted jersey is a useful article too. A smarter skirt and blouse may be taken for going ashore or for evening visits to other yachts during regattas. A plain sailor's hat with club burgee or yacht's name on the ribbon, and a soft blue cap for windy weather, need be your only headgear. For rough weather you *must* have a regular seaman's oilskin down to your ankles and a sou'-wester. Nothing else will keep you dry when the boat is smothered in sea. If you like a morning swim overboard you must not forget a bathing costume, and take care that your shoes, both for deck and cabin, have no nails whatever in them, as they play sad havoc with decks and varnished woodwork, and cause much mutterings and growlings from headquarters. And now I must close these remarks for the present; for though the subject of yachting is inexhaustible, the space at my disposal for writing on it is not, and I can only assure you that, should you be induced to take to this charming and health-giving pastime, when the time comes to lay up your little craft at the end of the season, you will do so with deep regrets, and town life and the beaten track will seem very tame and spiritless after the freshness and freedom of the sparkling waters.

EVERYTHING GETS TOPSY-TURVY

A DAY'S DUCK-SHOOTING IN KASHMIR

BY MAJOR W. R. YEILDING, C.I.E., D.S.O.

'THE Hokra Jheel will be shot on Thursday next, beginning at 10.30 A.M. Kindly note below whether you can arrange to shoot then, and if so, the number of boats required, so that they may be ready.'

In response to the above invitation, five of us trotted gaily away from the European quarter at Srinagar one bright frosty morning last December. The preserve which we were going out to shoot is about five miles from the city, and an excellent cart-road leads up to it. The ride out in the fresh, crisp morning air was most enjoyable, and the views of the snows on the Pir Punjal Mountains in front of us as we sped along indicated the probability of a bright day, with the light in our favour, even if the birds might in consequence be somewhat wilder than usual.

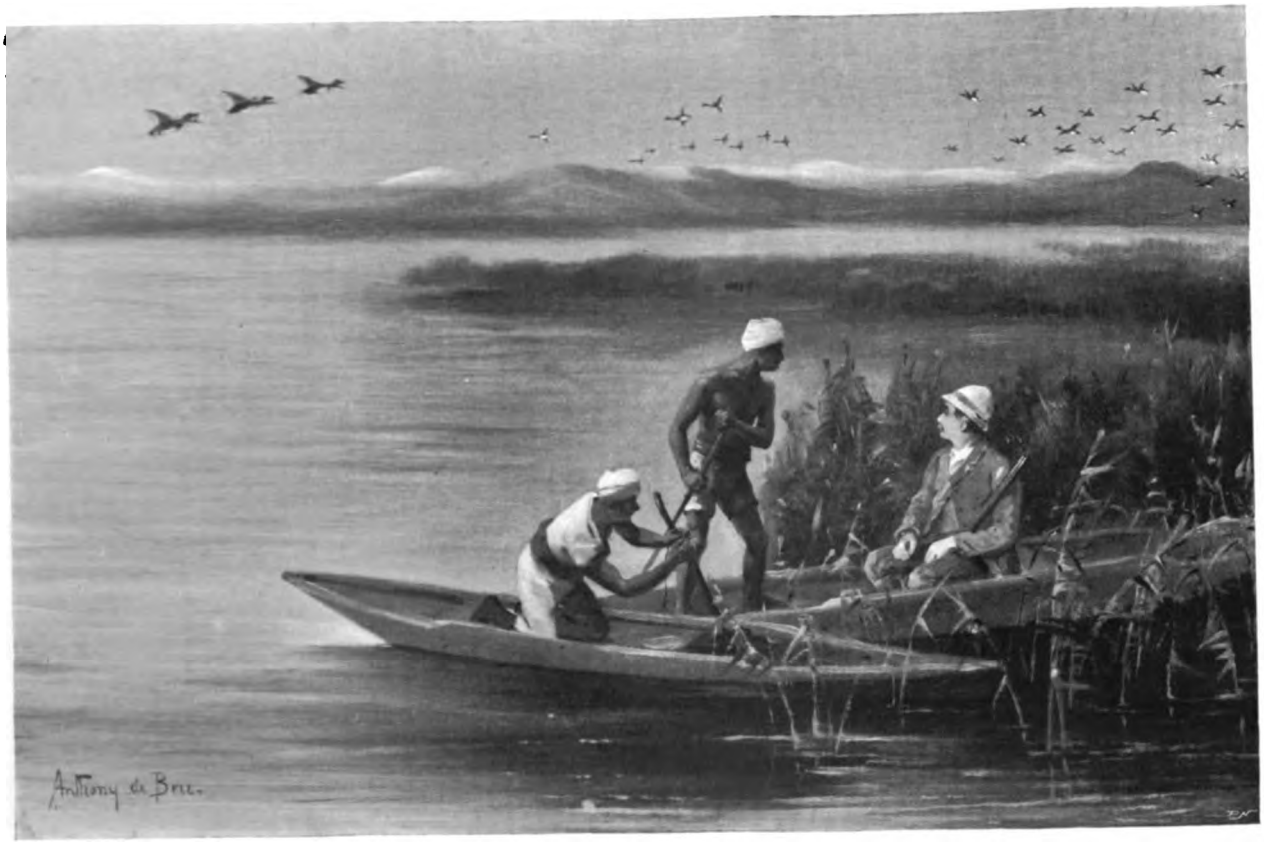
On arriving at the Hokra Jheel, or Lake, we found the boats and boatmen waiting for us, and after drawing lots for the five shooting stations on the border of the water, each shooter proceeded to his post in a shooting boat accompanied by another boat and two men to pick up his birds. In addition to the above,

five other boats were told off to act as beaters, and ten coolies, armed with old tin cans, were sent round the edges of the water and through the long grass to keep the duck on the move above the shooters' posts.

As we paddled along in our small flat-bottomed boats over the smooth surface of the lake, thousands and literally tens of thousands of mallard, white-eye, gadwall, and teal continued to rise in clouds in front of us, and long strings of geese were seen soaring overhead preparatory to transferring themselves elsewhere for the day. The lake is the great wildfowl sanctuary of Kashmir, itself perhaps one of the most favoured haunts of wild duck and geese in the world. Although so numerous, they by no means fall an easy prey to the gunner, and a well-known English baronet, who has had shooting experience in almost every part of the world, has recorded his opinion that in no other land has he found small game-shooting more difficult.

For this there are several explanations. The cramped kneeling or sitting positions of the guns in the little flat-bottomed boats, which make a good shooting 'swing' difficult, the respectful distances maintained by the duck, the extraordinary strength of the mallard—which succumb to nothing short of a knockdown blow—and the great pace of their flight, as well as the lightning-like swerve which follows on any movement on the part of the shooter, are, perhaps, the principal ones, coupled with the hustling which the birds get from the neighbouring guns and the beaters. It is no unusual thing for a beginner at the game, though perhaps no tiro at ordinary mixed shooting in India or at home, to expend a hundred cartridges on the Hokra preserve in a day and to pick up fewer than half a dozen birds for them. Indeed, one or two gentlemen whose innate modesty will not admit of their names appearing in print have, to the writer's knowledge, covered themselves with glory by obtaining duck there as a maiden effort. Worlds would not tempt us to disclose what duck is meant.

Having reached the post which falls to our lot, we proceed to conceal ourselves from little prying eyes as well as possible. High reeds grow round the margin of the lake, and our men force the boat into a good clump of them. They are then propped up with twigs around us, and the pick-up boat proceeds to place our wooden decoy ducks in the water close by. While these arrangements are in progress, and before the signal shot has been fired by No. 5, who always begins the shoot, thousands of heavy duck and teal pass within easy range with a confidence which is



THE BOAT IS FORCED INTO A CLUMP OF REEDS

never similarly displayed once the shooting actually begins. They appear to be taking complete stock of our *ruse de guerre*, and are having a good quack over it. The pick-up boat is then paddled to another clump of reeds some sixty yards away and concealed as well as possible. All now is ready for the fray, and a signal shot from No. 5 is only awaited.

Bang! Now we're off. Here they come, sailing along quite easily with no signs of any fire-begotten trepidation so far. Up with the good old Purdey like lightning, and that drake in the centre of the line is singled out.

Bang! Alas for the easily! Just as the gun went up the wary mallard, which had probably been peppered on some former occasion, caught the glint of the barrel, and gave a sharp swerve to the left, which caused us to fire at his tail and blow a handful of feathers out of it. Off he goes, none the worse for our trouble; but one of his companions, less fortunate, receives a full charge of No. 5½ all over him, and comes down with a bang and a splash. Away he goes towards the nearest available shelter in the reeds, and the pick-up boat after him. A long fish spear is produced, and just as he is congratulating himself at having evaded his pursuers, he is caught in the ribs with the spear and brought to bag fluttering and quacking. The 'pick-up' then conceals itself again, awaiting further developments. The cartridge magazine is looked to and our seat in the boat, which somehow has a most inconvenient trick of becoming disarranged with nearly every shot, is straightened up a bit. Steady; they are coming again—teal this time—and quite four hundred of them together. This is what we have been waiting for for years! As close together as eggs in a basket, and the range perhaps thirty-five yards. Now for the leading lot, and the others will fly into it. Up goes the gun, and—bad luck to them—up go the whole of the teal, too, as if animated by one thought. Talk of sheep following each other. They are simply not in it with the Hokra teal. A clean miss both barrels. Evidently trying to brown the creatures doesn't pay, and we resume our crouching position somewhat moodily.

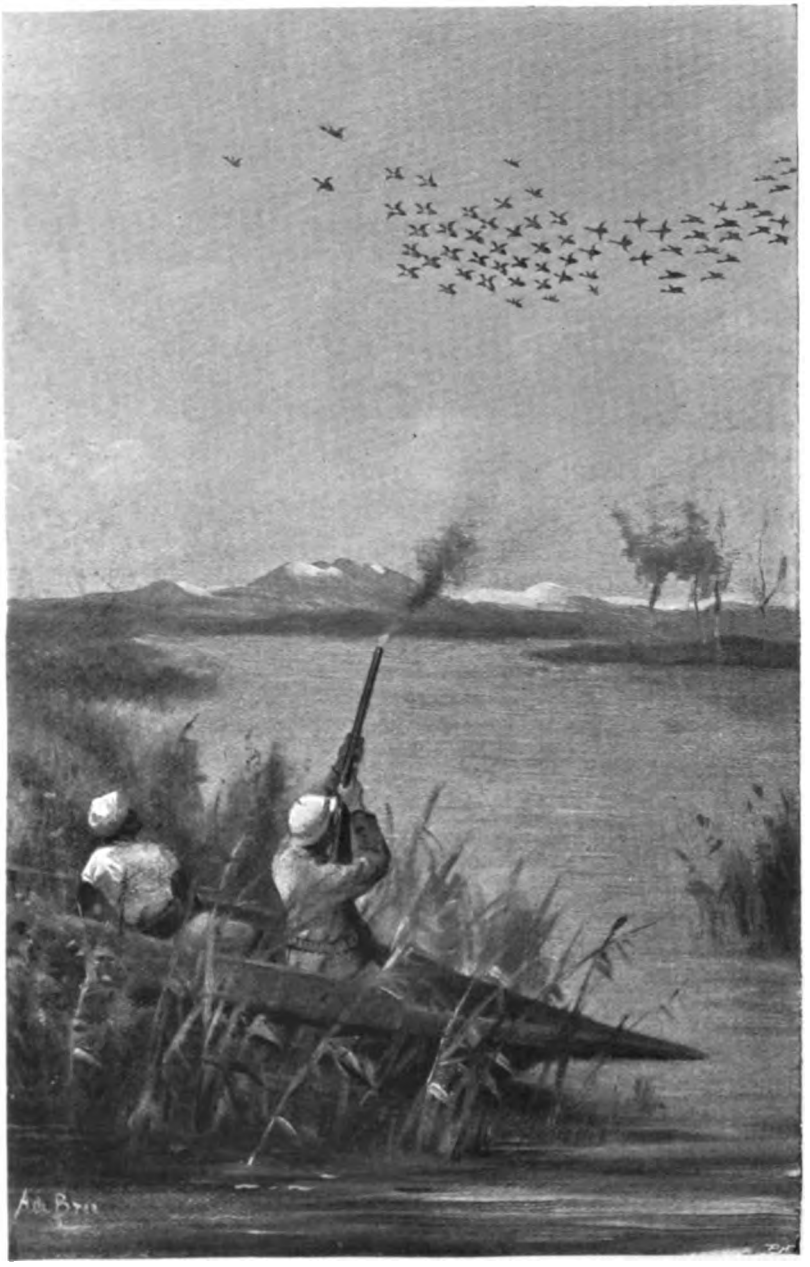
However, it's a poor heart that never rejoices, and we feel better again as two white-eye swing by to the right and left of us. The first is a miss, but the second shot catches him fair, and down he goes as dead as bacon. Mark the advancing line of gadwall! Straight on to us this time and within easy range. Bang, bang, from No. 4 close by, and up they go well out of shot. Never mind, here come others—straight overhead and nicely within range. The powder evidently is not shooting straight

to-day. We mean to drop those absurd nitro compounds for the future and stick to good old black. Nothing like it! What, six misses in succession with black, and most of the birds well within range? Black powder evidently has all gone wrong lately. We wonder Purdey doesn't start making bicycles instead of guns. We wish he had not made this gun. We will now sit down and mop our brow and try to grow calm. We enter genially into conversation with our boatman. Has he noticed that the gun and also the powder have been behaving badly to-day? The ruffian is apparently dense—an unsympathetic Kashmiri. He remarks that we are shooting very badly. 'Kookun Sahib is a good shot. He also gives good *bucksheesh*.' 'Silence, *budzat*; you are frightening the duck! Would that thou wert a duck and thou wouldst have more excuse for quacking!' Gas But, boatman, remarks in Kashmiri to his friend, Khizar But, boatman, that the temper of *Huzoor* is very bad to-day, and that the occasion is not propitious for the followers of the Prophet. Khizar But, boatman, scratches himself and grins behind the *Sahib's* back. There is a frost which can be felt, though not the product of ordinary freezing.

Now we have had a rest and feel better. That beastly gun headache has disappeared, and we feel well disposed to all men again. Swish! A teal past our left ear. Caught him neatly. Pick-up may leave him alone, as he is quite dead. Bang! bang! A right and left that time. Good old Purdey! The Colonel was right when he said that you built a gun which felt like a toy and shot like a cannon. Sorry to have made that allusion about bicycles. *Mea culpa*.

A pintail as I live! Bang! bang! Missed him. Two gadwall this time. Ah! well done myself. No, I'm blessed if I haven't missed again! What! two more misses? That wretched No. 4 put me off again. I wish he were in Jerusalem, or Jericho, or somewhere. Confound the fellow! I'm sure he's only frightening the birds. Last time he turned up at the end of the day with only one, and Jack swears that was snared.

Here they come straight overhead—a *paddling* of ducks. The drake in the centre is our bird, and none other shall tempt us. Straight on to him, and keep the gun moving with his flight as the trigger is being pulled. That is the whole art of duck-shooting straight overhead. Down he comes stone dead. Operation repeated five times. There is nothing easier than this. Why on earth have we been all these years discovering it? 'Tis simplicity itself. One *can't* miss.



UP GOES THE GUN, AND UP GO THE WHOLE OF THE TEAL

Can't, indeed! There go five of them, and deuce a feather. The art of duck-shooting is evidently not acquired in ten minutes. Who, from Adam, is this coming towards me in a boat and frightening every bird in the Jheel away? No. 4, *of course*. Can I spare any cartridges? Yes; take as many as you want, and hurry away for goodness' sake. Your E.C. cartridges have proved a failure, and the frost appears to have affected your Schultze. Oh . . . I shouldn't wonder. . . . Did you have quinine

WHO, FROM ADAM, IS THIS?

this morning? Good-bye; hope your luck will change anyhow now. Your fingers are out of order, are they, from the kicking of your gun? Try some medicine for it as soon as possible. . . . By-bye. Confound the fellow—will he *never* go? Here it's three o'clock and I've only got forty-one duck. It's pretty certain that that old fox at No. 5 has at least fifty by now.

And, by Jove, so he had when we knocked off at 4.30. 'Peace hath its victories no less renowned than war.'

MORALISINGS ON GOLF

BY THE HON. AND REV. E. LYTTELTON

THERE are occasions when the mystery which inhabits this bewitching pastime is borne in upon the spirit with all its unexplained wonder. One is while roaming in utter solitude over the desolate slopes of some high and boundless down in mid December, with the east wind shrieking fiercely round, and the ball disappearing into a misty space, leaving you in ignorance of its direction, except that you are sure it has gone wrong. Now and then a lonely gull comes and mocks you and is swirled away into the gloom. And on you go, a spectral apparition of a lunatic in a mist, flogging angrily at that little white orb, perfectly happy, but hardly able to say why.

Another occasion I can vividly recall. It was on Cromer links last August. I had pulled miserably into dense gorse from the third tee, and soon was tramping in shirt-sleeves moodily among the peculiarly stinging prickles of that coast. Just then began a rain of the kind which portends a wet afternoon. The ball, a new one, was hopelessly lost, and the game had to be stopped. It occurred to me with some force that this was the seamy side of golf, and that there is much in the game which renders it very marvellous that middle aged men should go through so much to spend time, money, and temper, with apparently so little return.

Again, what spectacle can be in its true aspect so utterly puzzling as that of two golfers buttonholing each other in the evening of a long day's play? You can hear A. begin gravely enumerating to B. every single stroke he has played through the whole of the afternoon's play, with a look on his face showing a profound conviction that B. will patiently listen to the bitter end.

And so he does; but on one perfectly well-understood condition — viz. that A. will, when his tale is done, as patiently listen to a similar recital from B. That is the 'contrat social' among golfers. I once listened to two stout matrons in a third-class carriage conversing, if the word may so be used, about their babies. They were working-men's wives, I gathered, and what happened was that No. 1 poured out a mass of tiny facts about her infant for a good seven minutes at a stretch. No. 2 listened with an impassive countenance, and at the end said, 'Ha! really now. Well, *my* little Johnny,' &c. &c., and off she went for her seven minutes. Here was a similar compact. Each of two parties consents to a certain dose of somewhat uninteresting facts, in order to enjoy the rich reward of administering a similar dose in return. But these were silly babbling folk, and their babies were only young human beings. In the other case the talkers are men well on in life, high up in the service of their country, and the subject is the number of knocks given to a gutta-percha ball between two holes in the ground, and whether the knocks were given with one sort of stick or another. The supreme importance of this theme, of course, explains why educated men should behave in regard to it not unlike the two old fishwives about their babies.

There is, however, in the nature of the talk something not easy to explain. People often say that hunting or cricket 'shop' is as bad as golfing 'shop.' It may, no doubt, be as unintelligible to the casual outsider, and whatever is unintelligible is dull. But there is one characteristic of golf 'shop' which is almost universal, and is not only extremely rare in other sorts of athletic or sporting chat, but whenever it occurs, except in relation to this one subject, it is considered a plain indication of bad breeding or bad taste —that is its blatant unabashed egotism. Think of the floods of talk that rage in a golf hotel. Unless a competition is that moment going forward, there is little for anyone to say except to detail his own successes and failures. When talking about cricket a player must keep his interest in his own performances within due bounds, and unless he is a slave to that side of the subject there is much else which he ought to find interesting, especially such matters as the changing of the bowling and the disposition of the fields; in short, the co-operative elements in the game. And it is just the same with football, and still more so with rowing and hunting. But the egotism of golfers knows no bounds. It expects unlimited toleration and gets it. Hence we are all egotists at golf, simply because the game does not allow us to be anything else, and nobody seems to mind.

Still there must be some other reason for this exceptional state of things, and I think this is it.

An enormous majority, I suppose, of ordinary golfers are men who have either never succeeded in any other outdoor games, or who have from lapse of time lost their enjoyment in them. Now to both of these classes golf comes as a peculiarly perfect invention. The day arrives when a cricketer becomes aware that for some unknown reason, subtle and almost unperceived, he is unable to stoop to a ball at mid-off as he once could. So he shifts uneasily to another part of the field, and his attention gets to be more and more fixed on batting as a means of showing that he is still capable of something 'not unworthy men who fought with gods.' But after a very few years, quite imperceptibly his rapid hitting becomes less rapid, and the hits when they come off are made with more effort and produce less effect than once they did. His defence is still dogged and fairly accurate, but he is not one of those players who love sticking in without 'notching.' Something odd has happened to his wrists, and something to his back; the latter, whatever it is, makes him always late to leg-balls, the former makes him frequently late for the square-cut, and a very common fate for him is to be caught at short slip for seven or eight poor runs made by a snick to leg and one straight drive. In short, this princely game, which twenty years ago added lustre to his living, now speaks to him, in gentle but unmistakable tones, of decay. He may, and often does, explain at great length to his acquaintances that the change is in the game, not in himself; but in the cool hours of the morning he recognises the truth 'nous ne sommes plus jeunes.'

At this juncture golf dawns on his horizon. Some friend coaxes him into buying clubs, and after a day or two of wonderment that any sane being can see anything in it, he soon finds that when considering his holiday resort the question of the distance of links from the hotel becomes increasingly urgent. He has been bitten. Why?

The reason is now pretty obvious. It is not only that he has found a pastime which gives him health, companionship, and a marvellously complete change of thought from his professional routine, but he is elated once more with the magical pleasure of making progress. Progress is at the bottom of all lasting delight, and here is the secret of the enslaving power of golf over middle-aged men. They find themselves once more improving at a game which is highly thought of, and this is a sensation they have not experienced for twenty years—perhaps never. It is a

sensation which wakes up slumbering memories of youth; it seems to deceive the quadragenarian into thinking that he is again a lusty lissom lad of nineteen, only of course far wiser. The hue of life has changed for him, and, in the teeth of all evidences of figure, digestion, and scanty furniture on the summit of his crown, he is joyous and ebullient with the idea of rejuvenescence.

Nothing else will explain the facts. Never shall I forget the aspect of a cricketing acquaintance of mine one fine afternoon in August as he came jauntily tripping over the sand dunes, having just completed a successful round, and beaten his humble opponent (poor soul!) by 15 holes. He was a good fifty years old, but had only lately been brought under the influence of golf's kindly spell. From forty yards off he hailed me in ringing tones, anticipating all inquiries, 'I say, I've just been round in less than 100! Never had such a time in my life. Went round with the pro. yesterday, and, by George! you should have seen my drives! You know this is only the twelfth time I've ever played. Deuced good' (or some equivalent expression) 'I call it, don't you?' All this delivered with a radiance of delight beaming from every line of his sunburnt face; and off he goes, lightly prancing away over the sky-line, like a youngster of three-and-twenty who has just seen reason to believe that he is not going to be unsuccessful in his first love. I could not help saying to myself, as from the centre of my familiar gorse-bush I watched his rotund and retreating form, 'Skip while you can, old chap; unless you are very singular, you've got some terrible days of disappointment before you. Wait till your drive becomes a slice, and your cleek shot disappears for ten months on end, and your iron becomes a mere divotting tool, and then see if you can laugh and sing like this. Alas! unmindful of their doom, &c.'

One corollary from this is that to gain the full reward from this amazing game a cricketer ought not to learn it till he is about thirty-five or forty years old. Many will dispute this, and say that it is too late for a man to hope for excellence. Very likely; but I maintain that if he learns it young enough to get the peculiar swing from the hips and other essentials of excellence, he must begin it while he is still supple—in other words, while he is still improving in cricket. Now, let alone that this may injure his cricket, the point is that he loses all chance of experiencing the ineffable charm of progress in an outdoor game at the time of life when he most needs it. The fascination of golf does not depend on excellence of attainment,

but on progress, and it is a pity to waste the early years of this experience on the time of youth when it can be got in many other ways.

I hope, then, that no one will accuse me of failing to appreciate golf. It is in my opinion a singularly perfect invention, and, having said so much, I will proceed to one or two remarks of a more critical character.

My readers will remember a discussion carried on by some athletic and other notables as to whether golf is a first-rate game or not. It would, I think, have been more to the purpose if golf had been removed from the category of games altogether, and then discussed on its merits in comparison with other pastimes less dissimilar to it than cricket and football. To my mind the word game ought for clearness sake to be confined to such games as cricket, fives, racquets, football, &c., where the opposition between the players is more real than in golf. In a game, surely, the tactics of one player ought to tell directly on the play of his opponent. The best efforts of A. ought to call out the full powers of B. at the moment, and then you have the finest response of skill to skill and of strength to strength, so that the eye can travel rapidly from one to the other as if they were parts of one perfect picture. And so they are. The sight of a grand first cut at tennis skimming and hissing into the corners, and then, just as the ball is going to settle on to 'chase a yard,' with that comfortable sort of rattle that it used to make when Lambert hit it, to see the defender's racquet flash round and pick it up at the only possible instant of time, and send it whistling over to the tambour—this is the enjoyment of a spectator at a real game. In a very different way, the same principle holds good in that very sobering pursuit—chess. Each man's play is entirely affected by his enemy's movements. On the other hand, we do not call rowing a game, because this element is missing: it is quite conceivable that on the occasion of a race a crew might do as well if there were no antagonists at all. Billiards is, according to this, only just a game, because the opening of each break is affected by the way your adversary leaves the balls. But golf seems to me no more a game in this sense than rowing. Now and again your tactics may be affected by your enemy's score, but only in the way that a runner is stimulated to spurt because his rival is just ahead of him. In golf, if the rule about a 'stimey,' which at present seems to me very useless and troublesome, were modified so as to allow A. to deliberately block B. if he liked, you would then introduce a game element, but it

would be similar to allowing a runner or a rower to foul his enemy when he was in trouble. In short, golf is more of a race than a game; to be precise, it is a supreme form of a sort of obstacle race, but, like all highly-developed games, it is without any very close parallel.

This being so, whatever be the indisputable merits of this pastime, it lacks the peculiar greatness of great games, but it possesses many of the best features of racing, and adds to them the peculiar call on the nerve which racing is without. Its chief demerit lies in the fact that the stimulus to a golfer is either slightly selfish in character or emulative. By the first I mean the inducement to better your own record, a harmless sort of motive; by the second I mean the wish to beat your adversary, a motive which taken by itself can hardly be called harmless. And even if this be disputed, compare the nature of either of these *stimuli* with that afforded by the co-operative delight of a winning game of cricket or football; the give and take between friends, the temper required for a bowler to go off just when his captain thinks he ought, or for a batsman to go in late when he thinks himself fitted to go in early, or for a fine dribbler at Association football to pass lavishly and ungrudgingly to the right hand and to the left. Of course, attempts are made to modify all this by representative golf competitions; but none the less the game is terribly individualistic, and must remain so. In this one respect, this most lovable pursuit falls behind croquet (a game which I never could do with at all). It never demands self-effacement, and makes little appeal to generosity.

Hence it is a great nuisance that when you play with a stranger what ought to be a friendly match, you never know which of the above two inducements have most effect on him. Presumably he is keen; but is it because he wishes to do himself justice, or simply that he wants to beat you? If the former, then one can get along comfortably enough; he may be doleful at times, but his dole is unmixed with vinegar, and there is all the difference between gentle melancholy and spite. If the latter, you very soon find out that it is not only his own 'foozling' which is enraging him, but your painfully learnt precision; and that just as you are innocently rejoicing at your pretty lofting-approach, he is inwardly wishing you had done it badly. Now, however much in our darker hours we may fall victims to this weakness, the fact remains that it is not only a weakness but an abominably foolish one. What earthly difference does it make to me if my adversary plays well? The peculiar isolation

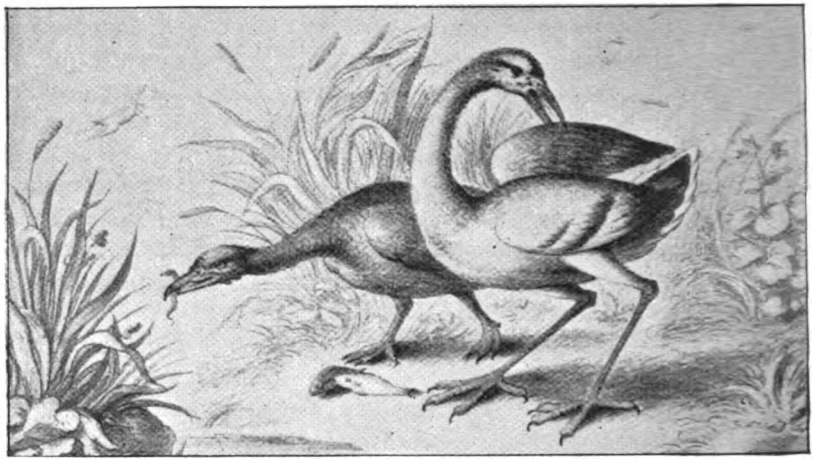
of play which, as we note, is characteristic of golf, ought certainly to be a preventive of all this silly sourness and malignancy of spirit towards a fellow-man. If A. feels that his own play is respectable, he ought from that very fact to have a reserve of good humour to spare when he sees his opponent doing well. It is also grossly unsportsmanlike not to take pleasure in the sight of a fine stroke no matter who makes it, and there is no such pleasant emollient to rivalry as when a discomfited player resignedly picks up his ball out of the deepest part of a bunker, and then is unable to suppress his admiration at his adversary's fine drive off the next tee.

One more criticism and I have done. As compared with every ball game that I can think of (except croquet), golf fails æsthetically. I mean that considering the extraordinary delicacy of the strokes, it is disappointing to find that there is among *good* players a great sameness of style, in so far as the motion of the limbs is concerned. It may be that a better-trained observer would say the contrary, but I find it difficult at 150 yards distance to see who a player is from the way he plays the ball. I say among good players, because there are peculiarities of posture and motion of limbs among really bad players that are in the strictest sense of the word individual and characteristic. They need not be described. But to obtain accuracy it is almost necessary to strip oneself of one's native qualities and imitate as closely as possible the exact attitude and movements of the nearest professional, till, while you are out on the links, you feel yourself in danger of losing your individuality in his. I am aware that there are different methods in fashion of playing certain strokes; one school of players stands in front, another on a level with and another behind the ball; but this does not contradict what is here urged. It is not the position taken up, but the movement of the arms and shoulders, which is likely, in proportion as a player attains precision, to be assimilated to a conventional type. And that type is by no means altogether graceful. I should not presume to disparage its usefulness, but no one will ever make the preliminary 'waggle' and settling of the feet before a drive, or the odd cocking of the left elbow before an approach shot, anything but uncouth, and to an uninitiated beholder somewhat ridiculous. And it should be remembered that of æsthetics in games the uninitiated spectator is as good a judge as the oldest devotee. It required no initiation to see the beauty of John Tomkins' stroke at tennis, or the matchless charm of every movement of William Gray in the racquet-court. And, however

much people tried to imitate these models, they never succeeded in losing their own individual style. But you can imitate everything about a professional at golf excepting his precision; everything, that is, which is contained in the idea of style. I would hazard as an explanation of this that there is a very great difference between hitting a ball in motion and at rest; in the latter case you can in a leisurely way conform your limbs to your model; in the former case you must rely on Nature, and there is no time to be anything but yourself; that means, your motions are your own and not another's.

There are golfers who will not allow that the game is not absolutely perfect in every conceivable respect, and who will therefore say that this is untrue. But, assuming that the players we are comparing begin quite young, the proposition is not easy to refute. Look at a batch of caddies swinging their clubs about. Nobody would ever see such similarity of movement in a lot of little boys batting.

Such are some of the reflections which in the intervals of some very muddling and uncertain play this charming pastime has extorted from me. Lest they should seem to some to savour of ingratitude, let me end by saying that if cricketers past their prime, and the numerous Englishmen who have never had an athletic prime, do not feel thankful for the boon of golf, they ought to. From their point of view it is one of the greatest benefits ever conferred by one country on another.



BIG GAME IN THE ARCTIC REGIONS

BY REAR-ADMIRAL A. H. MARKHAM

In these days of comparatively easy and rapid transit to every conceivable frequented part of the globe, when keen and enthusiastic lovers of the chase can, with comfort and celerity, be transported to happy hunting-grounds where they are able to enjoy, to their heart's content, the pursuit of game of every imaginable description from an elephant to a jack rabbit, or from an ostrich to a snipe—where, in fact, the variety and extent of the bag are simply governed by the limit of the hunter's purse and his skill and dexterity as a marksman—it has always struck me as somewhat singular that, with rare exceptions, the Polar regions, which are absolutely teeming with game of many varieties, are so little visited. Possibly it is in consequence of the supposed difficulty in getting there? But such a reason, to the majority of English sportsmen, would only be an incentive that would render an excursion to those regions all the more attractive.

Perhaps they may have formed an idea that the severity of the cold in high northern latitudes makes life disagreeable, if not unendurable? That, however, would be a very erroneous impression, for the temperature in the Arctic regions, during the summer months, is generally mild and pleasant. I have, not unfrequently, found it so warm while trudging along the valleys

or ascending the hills in high latitudes, that I have been only too glad to discard my coat, or any superfluous article of attire I might have encumbered myself with when starting for a day's excursion after reindeer or other game.

Our fellow-countrymen think nothing of penetrating into the unhealthy morasses of the dark continent of Africa in their desire to create for themselves reputations as lion-slayers; or they will live for weeks, and even months, in the pestilential swamps and jungles of India and Ceylon in order that they may be able to say they have killed an elephant or a tiger; they will scour the prairies of North America after antelopes, bears, and the now almost extinct bison; they will, with cheerfulness, brave the mosquito-infested regions of Canada for moose and wapiti, and they will visit the unknown and unexplored parts of Australia searching for kangaroo and wallaby. The pursuit of these different descriptions of game can only be accomplished by the expenditure of much time and money, and those risks to life and health inseparable to unhealthy climates and hostile natives, as well as the ordinary perils incidental to the pursuit of wild and ferocious animals.

My object in writing these pages is to acquaint those who are desirous of enjoying a change from the old beaten tracks, that there is yet another field, not very far distant from our own country, comparatively unknown, where excellent sport can be obtained, and where the element of danger, if such be considered an inducement, is not altogether absent, and which is accessible to sportsmen during the summer months. I mean the Arctic regions. A trip there can easily be arranged, and it will not occupy more time than will be required for a visit to the hunting fields of Africa, Asia, or Australia, while the expense will be infinitely less.

To the man of wealth who is fond of the sea, and is the fortunate possessor of a yacht, nothing, of course, is more easy. The western shores of Spitzbergen, and even Novaya Zemlya, can, without difficulty, be reached in a summer's cruise, and if the yacht be fitted with all the necessary appliances for killing whales, walruses, &c., most exciting sport may be obtained; but I propose to show that equally good, if not better, sport can be enjoyed in the same locality by those who are as keen and ardent sportsmen as their yachting *confrères*, but who have not the wherewithal to disburse the expenses necessary for the equipment of a special expedition to high latitudes.

The sport to be obtained is perhaps somewhat unique, so far

as the experience of the ordinary hunter goes, for it is not confined solely to animals terrestrial, but is also rendered attractive by the excitement attendant on the pursuit of those animals that inhabit the sea, and may thus be briefly enumerated. Afloat we have the great leviathan of the deep to contend with—namely, whales and other animals that come under the head of mammalia, such as narwhals, walruses, white whales, and seals. On the ice exciting sport can be obtained in the pursuit of Polar bears; while the plains and valleys of nearly all Arctic lands abound with reindeer, and in some of the most northern, and consequently more inaccessible, parts with musk oxen also.

Nor must the feathered tribe be altogether omitted from the category; for geese and ducks are found in large quantities breeding in the lakes and ponds that fringe the coast, while most excellent shooting is afforded by the guillemots, as they fly over your head more like rocketing pheasants than anything else, requiring a quick and dexterous shot to bring them down. The flesh of these birds in a stew or soup is preferable to either wild-geese or ducks.

I will now, as briefly as possible, state for the information of those who are desirous of benefiting by my advice, the procedure that should be followed, in order to participate in such sport as I have alluded to. My advice then is to go to Dundee and endeavour to make arrangements for a passage in a whaler about to sail for the whale fishery in Davis Straits and Baffin's Bay. I do not anticipate that any difficulty will be experienced on payment of a sum, certainly not exceeding 100*l.* (and probably half that amount), in obtaining permission to accompany one of these vessels; and although perhaps her captain may appear somewhat rough and unpolished in manner—the natural result of the adventurous life he has led and the absence of culture in those with whom he has been constantly associated—he will be found to possess sterling qualities, kind and hospitable to a degree, and ever willing and ready to do all in his power to promote the comfort of any fellow-passenger.

The sum I have mentioned, 100*l.*, covers all cost of messing for the six or seven months that the sportsman may be on board —no other expenses can possibly be incurred. All the outfit that is required is warm underclothing, a thick shooting suit, such as might be worn in Scotland in September or October, and a pair of good sea-boots. A double-barrel fowling-piece is, of course, indispensable, and also a good ·45 express rifle, or, better still, a ·4 magazine rifle, carrying an expanding bullet.

Take plenty of ammunition both for rifle and shot-gun. Being thus equipped, the sportsman is ready to start for what may fairly be described as a hunter's paradise, where, in addition to the pursuit of sport worthy his prowess, he will enjoy the charms and novelties inseparable from a summer's residence in the Arctic regions, during an almost endless day of several months' duration.

The accommodation on board will not, of course, be very spacious or luxurious, for it will consist simply of a bunk in the captain's cabin and a seat at his table. The fare will be more conspicuous, perhaps, for its quantity than for its quality; but as I do not suppose any epicure, or over-fastidious man, will embark on such an enterprise as I am endeavouring to sketch, it is needless to say any more on that head.

The Dundee whalers usually leave Scotland about the end of April or beginning of May, returning home in October or November. The passage across the Atlantic—never a very smooth or comfortable one—can be profitably spent in reading up Arctic literature, and in getting an insight into the methods in vogue in attacking and capturing whales, by conversing with the different members of the crew, who are always ready to relate to a willing ear the hair-breadth adventures of which they have individually been the hero. As the ship sails northward the region of perpetual day is reached, and the novelty of seeing the sun shining brightly at midnight is experienced—not altogether an unmixed blessing, for its rays will stream in during the night through the little skylight overhead, so as to effectually banish sleep from your eyelids until accustomed to their presence, or until wearied nature asserts itself.

After rounding the southern extremity of Greenland, ice is fallen in with, and this adds additional interest and excitement to the embryo Arctic sportsman. The long ocean swell which has been his constant companion since leaving Dundee is no longer felt; the ship steams quietly and almost noiselessly along in a perfectly quiescent and placid sea; the captain from the crow's nest conning her dexterously between the heavy masses of ice by which she is surrounded.

Prior to this, however, all the necessary preparations have been made on board for waging war with the huge *cetacea* that inhabit these seas. The boats have all been overhauled and equipped, and are in a perfect state of readiness to be despatched at a moment's notice; for the very fact of being close to the ice is an intimation that the presence of whales may be expected. A harpoon

gun is mounted on a swivel in the bows of each boat. To the harpoon, which is inserted into the barrel of the gun, is spliced a stout whale line, made of the very best hemp, 1½ inch in circumference, and somewhat over half a mile in length. This rope is very carefully coiled away in the bottom of the boat. Each boat is also provided with long iron lances, some 10 or 12 feet in length, which are used to kill the whale after it has been harpooned. A hatchet is also kept in readiness to cut the line, in the event of its getting entangled in the boat, or round the legs of the men, as it swiftly runs out after a whale has been struck. Each boat is propelled by five oars, the harpooneer, who is in charge of the boat, pulling the bow oar. A sixth man steers with a long steer oar over the stern.

There are many species of whales found in the Arctic regions, but the only one that is sought after by our whalers is the *Balæna mysticetus* or Right whale; the others are of little commercial value, and being somewhat difficult to approach, and hard to kill, are seldom attacked.

The Right whale is distinguished from others by its enormous head, which is one-third the length of its body, and by the absence of a dorsal fin, as also by the vertical direction of its 'blowing.' It is popularly supposed that the whale ejects water from its 'blowholes,' but this is an erroneous supposition, for what is seen is really nothing but the breath of the animal, which, on exhalation, is immediately condensed in the cold Arctic air, and falls in the form of a dense spray, leading the ignorant to imagine that it was originally ejected in the form of water.

When a whale has been mortally wounded, it ejects blood through its blowholes, and I have frequently seen the boats and men that have been employed in killing a whale perfectly drenched with blood.

The length of a full-sized whale is about 60 feet, and its greatest girth (immediately behind its pectoral fins) about 36 feet. Its displacement would be something like 70 or 80 tons, and the breadth of its tail would be about 24 feet. The tail is the most formidable weapon that a whale, when attacked by man, can use, and must therefore be carefully avoided. This advice is founded on personal experience hereafter to be related. A whale of the dimensions alluded to will yield about 20 tons of oil and about a ton and a quarter of whalebone; and as the commercial value of whale oil is now about 20*l.* per ton, and whalebone has risen to the enormous value of 2,500*l.* a ton, it stands to reason that the value of a good-sized whale would be between 3,000*l.* and 4,000*l.*

It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that the pursuit of the whale is still conducted with energy and persistence As the crew of a whaler, from the captain down to the youngest man, is paid at the termination of the voyage in accordance with the result of the catch, and in proportion to the rating he fills, every man on board is as eager as the captain to make the voyage as successful as possible. The crew of the boat that gets the first harpoon into a whale also receives a very considerable bonus, so that when a whale is sighted and the boats are despatched to effect its capture, a regular race ensues as to which boat shall arrive on

A REGULAR RACE ENSUES

the scene of action first; but the greatest care is always taken to approach the whale quietly, and to avoid 'scaring' him.

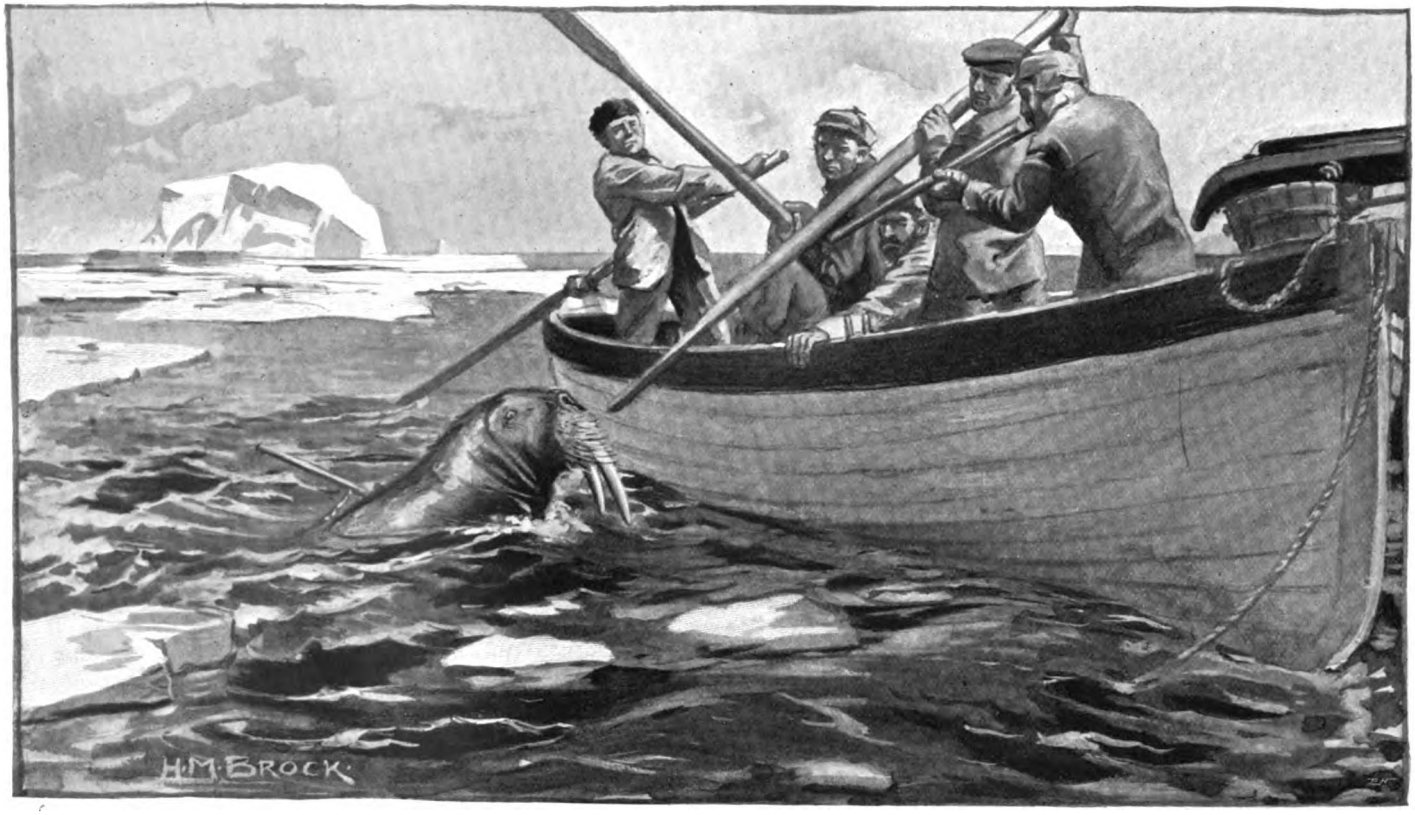
The complement of a whale ship is regulated by the number of boats she carries, so that when all the boats have been sent away after a whale, the only people remaining on board are the captain, who is directing operations from the crow's nest, the engineer, who is of course attending to the engines, and the doctor. In the event of any man being sick and unable to go in the boats, the doctor has to take his place; a wise regulation to insure a small sick list!

On a whale being sighted from the masthead, and on a fine clear day one may be seen eight or ten miles off, a couple of

boats are usually sent away, with instructions to approach quietly, and to place themselves in such positions that the whale will rise close to them; for they will be able to judge, approximately, the spot it will rise at from the direction in which they see it is going. A whale when undisturbed usually stops under water about ten minutes, and then comes to the surface, where it remains for about the same length of time. The boats, as may be supposed, are watched with suppressed eagerness by those on board. The whale is observed to rise and blow—now is the moment of intense excitement—one of the boats swiftly, but quietly, approaches it, the harpooneer is seen to cease rowing and to rise to his gun, a puff of smoke is seen, a faint report is, after a time, wafted towards us, a flag is immediately displayed in the boat, and we on board are thus informed that the boat, in whaling parlance, is 'fast' to the whale. The pent-up feelings of all burst out into a wild cheer—'A fall, a fall!' is shouted by the captain from his exalted position in the crow's nest; 'A fall, a fall!' is repeated by every soul on deck, and is taken up and echoed by those below. In an instant the whole ship teems with bustle and activity. The men on deck hasten to the boats and immediately commence to lower them, while those below rush up the hatchways straight from their bunks, scantily attired, with their clothes in one hand and their sea boots in the other, and scramble quickly into the boats, and in less time than I have taken to relate it, every boat in the ship is being lustily pulled in the direction of the 'fast' boat, the men dressing themselves as best they may while bending to their oars.

On being harpooned the whale frequently dives to the depth of perhaps three or four hundred fathoms, taking the line out with such rapidity that water has constantly to be poured on the bollard head, round which a turn of the line has been taken by the harpooneer, in order to prevent it from catching fire. In about twenty minutes or half an hour the unfortunate animal rises to the surface, somewhat exhausted after his long immersion, but only to be transfixed again by the harpoons from some of the other boats. When four or five harpoons have been discharged into its body, its capture is considered pretty certain. Other boats then approach, and kill the poor beast with their lances, which are plunged into its vitals to the depth of about six or seven feet. The ship then steams up, and the dead whale is taken alongside, when the operation of 'flensing'—i.e. removing the blubber from the carcase—is carried out. This generally occupies about three or four hours.

The capture of a whale is not unfrequently attended with dis-



THE HARPOON HAD TAKEN EFFECT

agreeable, and sometimes with fatal, consequences to those engaged in killing it. On one occasion I was in the boat employed in lancing a whale after it had been harpooned, when through the eagerness of our boat steerer, who disregarded one of the principal maxims of whaling—namely, 'to keep clear of the animal's tail'—we approached the whale in such a way that the beast in its flurry brought its enormous tail down on the boat, fortunately without striking any of its occupants, but with the result that one side of the boat was completely taken off, literally smashed to pieces, and the crew precipitated into the water. Clothed as we were in thick habiliments, with heavy sea boots on our feet, it would have gone hard with us had not one of the other boats speedily come to our rescue, for the temperature of the water at the time was at or about freezing point.

On another occasion my boat got 'fast' to a large whale, which, on being struck, dived with terrific velocity, the bows of the boat being enveloped in the smoke caused by the friction of the line on the bollard, as it was taken out. After diving to a depth of about 300 fathoms the whale stopped, and we were all congratulating ourselves on being so fortunate as to get fast to such a rich prize, when the whale suddenly took it into its head to start off again. During the short cessation of its headlong progress, the line had cooled, with the result that, instead of running out, it adhered to the bollard; in an instant the bow of the boat was dragged under water, and in another moment the boat would have been bodily taken down, but, fortunately for us, the water as it came over the bollard acted as a lubricant, the line rendered and the boat righted, but it was a narrow shave.

Whales are very tenacious of life, and I have seen a whale tow all the eight boats belonging to our ship, and then the vessel herself, before it was killed. We had been fast to it over nine hours, during which time it towed us a distance of thirteen miles. It was not despatched until five rockets had been fired into it, each one of which was heard to explode inside its body.

Walrus hunting is perhaps quite as exciting and as dangerous a pastime as killing whales, and is carried out in much the same manner; that is to say, the animal is harpooned with the same description of weapon, but a rifle is generally used to give it the *coup de grâce*.

Walruses are usually seen basking in the sunshine on detached pieces of heavy ice, sometimes by themselves, but more frequently in couples, or in small groups consisting of three or four or more. One is invariably on the watch, and will at once give notice to his

companions on the approach of danger, when the whole group will be on the *qui vive*. The walrus, unlike the seals, is very pugnacious, and when wounded is extremely fierce, and will boldly advance and attack its enemies. The first walrus that I had anything to do with was seen one afternoon peacefully reclining by itself on a small piece of ice. A boat was at once lowered to endeavour to effect its capture, in which I was permitted to act as harpooneer. Taking my station in the bows of the boat, and ascertaining for myself that the harpoon gun was loaded and primed, and placing my rifle in readiness close at hand, we pulled cautiously towards our prey. Although the beast was evidently disturbed, for it kept raising its head in a restless and uneasy manner, it failed to notice our approach, until we were well within range and I had risen to the harpoon gun. Suddenly catching sight of us, and apprehending its danger, it reared itself on its hind quarters, and glared viciously at us, its small eyes sparkling with rage and fury. At this moment he afforded a splendid shot, and taking careful aim I pulled the trigger, the report of the gun being followed by a tremendous splash in the water, which drenched nearly every one in the boat. The harpoon, however, had taken effect, and the beast was fast, but was so infuriated with the pain that, on coming to the surface, it immediately rushed towards the boat, which it attacked viciously with its formidable tusks, and nearly succeeded in ripping a plank out of her. Now was the time for my rifle, when two or three bullets from it put an end to the beast's existence, and our own danger; for had the brute succeeded in getting one of its tusks through the side of the boat, or even over the gunwale, we should assuredly have been either swamped or capsized, in either case in a somewhat disagreeable, if not perilous, situation.

It is not only the pain and irritation caused by a wound that will excite the pugnacity of walruses, for they have frequently, when met in large numbers or, as the whalers say, in herds, been known to attack a boat without having themselves been molested in the first instance. It is possible to shoot walruses dead with a rifle, but the surest and most approved method is to harpoon them. When shooting at a walrus the most deadly spot to take aim at is the back of the head, when the bullet penetrating the brain causes instant death. If killed in the water, the carcase invariably sinks and is lost. Their bodies are often found to be marked with scars and blotches, apparently the cicatrices of old wounds received in encounters with Polar bears, or while fighting among themselves. It is a fallacy to suppose that the female walrus

has no tusks, for they have been found well developed in both sexes.

The shooting of seals is very tame work, and affords comparatively little sport. They are harmless and inoffensive, and are easily killed by a bullet through their skulls as they lie peacefully reposing on the ice. Like the walrus, if shot in the water the body sinks and is lost. Sealing, on the whole, is a cruel trade, and I was always sorry when we came across them. The only time when a little excitement can be obtained is when a seal is seen sleeping on the ice and the hunter endeavours to stalk it; but they are so constantly on the alert for their natural enemy the bear, that it is very rarely they can be approached with success in this manner. It is said, but I will not vouch for the truth of the statement, that a seal never sleeps for more than 180 consecutive seconds at a time; it then takes a good look round and dozes off again. I have often watched a seal apparently sleeping on the ice, and it invariably raises its head at short intervals. They are reputed to be excessively fond of music, and on one occasion I saw several seals following a boat in which one of the crew was playing on a concertina, but whether they were moved by motives of curiosity in seeing a boat, or whether they were attracted by their love of music, I could not say.

There are several descriptions of seals indigenous to the Polar regions, and all find a common enemy in man. In the breeding season, about the month of April, they congregate in thousands on the ice, when immense numbers are slain by the ships engaged in the sealing trade, which is, pecuniarily, infinitely more profitable than whaling. It has not unfrequently happened that the ship's company of one vessel will kill as many as twenty and even thirty thousand seals in the space of a few days. When this wholesale slaughter takes place, they are killed not only with rifles, but with clubs specially adapted for the purpose.

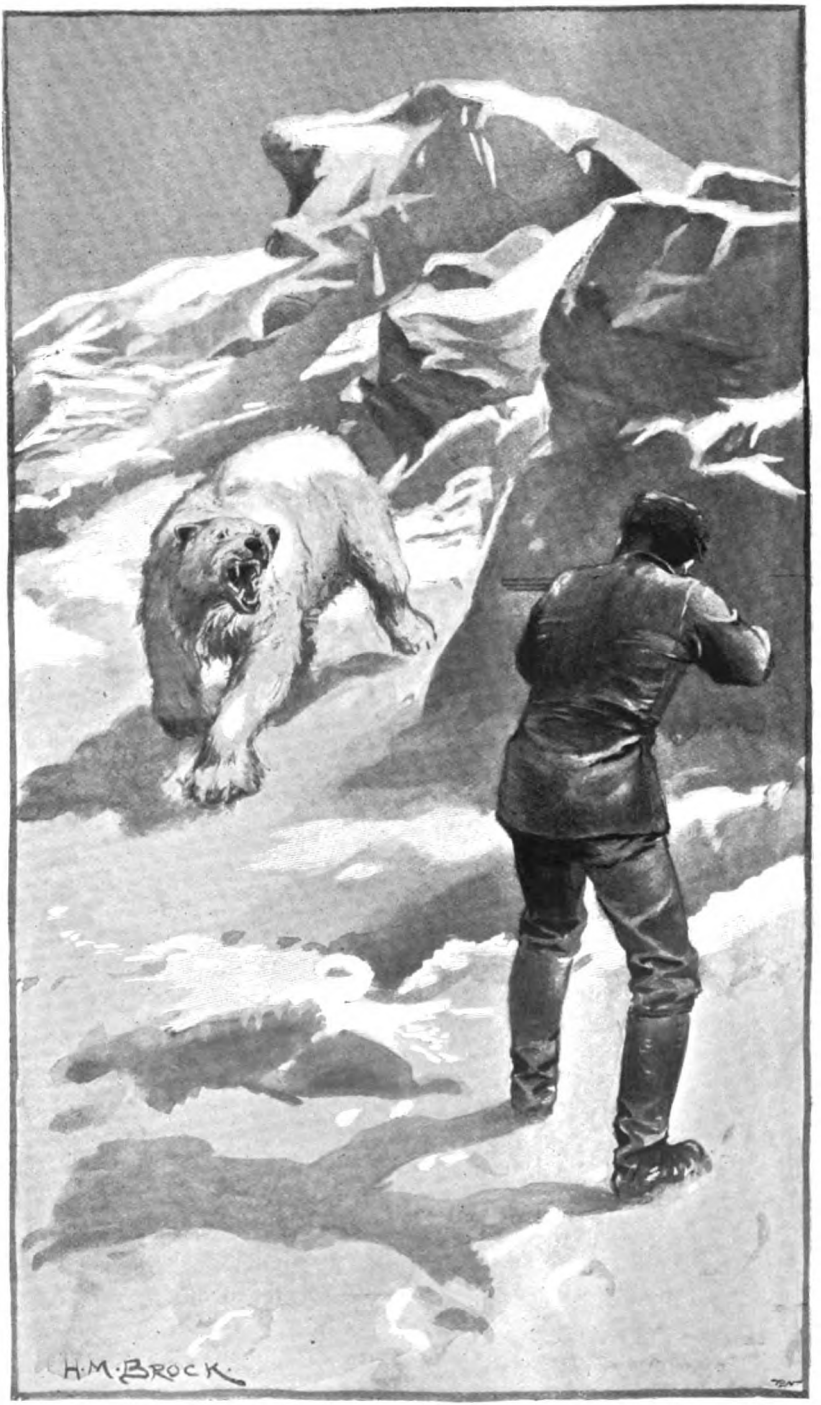
The Polar or ice bear is found all over the Arctic regions, but in greater numbers apparently in the southern part of the Polar regions than in the far north. The geographical distribution of the animal is, it may be inferred, governed by that of the seal, which forms its principal food. Where the seal abounds, there also will be found the Polar bear. As this animal has never yet been seen in the South Polar regions, it seems to me that the *Arctic* bear would be a more appropriate name for it.

It is by no means a formidable beast to meet on the ice if the hunter is armed with a good rifle, is a fairly steady shot, and keeps cool. During several trips I have made to the Arctic

regions I have shot a great number of bears, and have seldom found them inclined to assume the offensive. On scenting danger they will generally scamper off as quickly as they can over the ice, and at such a speed that pursuit, with any chance of success on the part of the hunter, is quite out of the question. On the only occasions when I have observed an inclination on their part to be disagreeable was once when pulling along the edge of the ice we somewhat suddenly came upon a female bear, accompanied by its cub, walking along unconcernedly on the floe. Immediately she observed us she plunged into the water and swam straight towards us, and would undoubtedly have got into our boat had I not put a bullet through its head, for its paw was actually placed on the gunwale of the boat. On another occasion I was pursuing a wounded bear on the ice, when I suddenly stumbled across it lying down behind a hummock. Immediately on perceiving me it rose and rushed towards me open-mouthed, when I fortunately succeeded in dropping it about five yards off. Had I been flurried and missed, or had my rifle failed to go off (for I was using a single-barrelled one at the time), I should doubtless have had a bad time of it.

Bears congregate in great numbers round the carcase of a whale after it has been *flensed*, and I have been informed that as many as 30 or 40 have been seen, and the majority killed, while enjoying a meal on the dead whale. It is not an unusual practice, when a ship is beset in the ice, to burn some meat or fat, the smell from which will very soon attract any bear that may be in the neighbourhood, when a leaden messenger puts an end to his curiosity and voracity at the same time. Bears are almost as much at home in the water as they are upon the ice, and I have met them swimming about in the sea hundreds of miles from land, and with no ice in sight. Of course in the water they fall an easy prey to the hunter, for a boat speedily overhauls them, and they are easily shot. In this way I have killed five bears in one afternoon; but this mode of shooting them can hardly be regarded as sport, where all the advantages are on the side of the sportsman, and the poor bear labours under every disadvantage. On the ice, however, the bear is met on more equal terms, and is afforded better opportunities of effecting an escape.

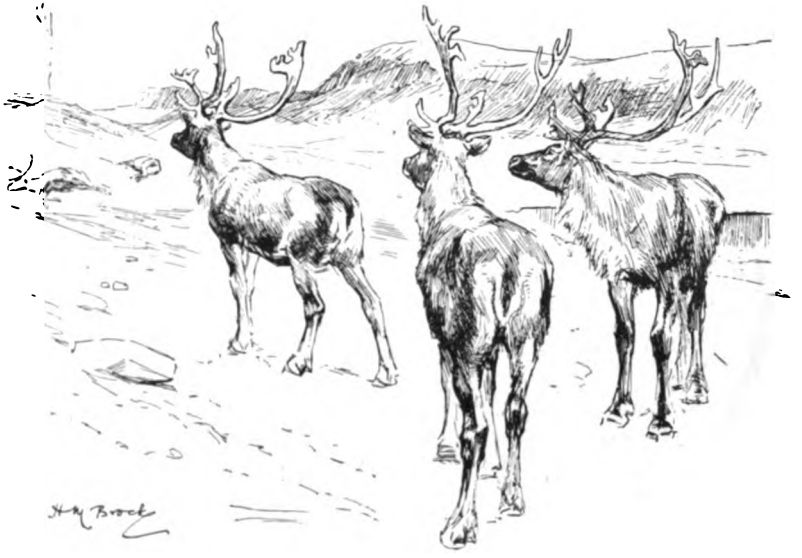
Their strength is prodigious. On one occasion we disturbed a bear in the enjoyment of a feast on the ice. On approaching, we discovered that its meal consisted of a white whale about fifteen feet long, and weighing at least three or four tons. It is difficult to



RUSHED TOWARDS ME OPEN-MOUTHED

conceive how this large carcase could have been transported from the water to the ice-floe, yet there is but little doubt that it must have been effected by the bear. Of course, other bears may have assisted, but, even granting this, it was a wonderful feat for them to accomplish. On another occasion we observed a bear eating a portion of the tongue of a whale that we had killed the previous day. It was lying on a large piece of ice, and must have weighed nearly two tons.

My space does not admit of any detailed reference to the capture of narwhals and white whales. They afford excellent sport when the larger and more valuable members of the whale



STOP AND LOOK ROUND

tribe are not present. They are killed in the same manner—with harpoon and lance.

When the ship's company are engaged in cutting up, or *flensing*, a whale, if in the vicinity of land, occasions will doubtless offer for visiting the shore, and these opportunities should never be lost by the sportsman. Reindeer abound in the plains and valleys of nearly all Arctic lands, and afford excellent sport, to say nothing of the very pleasant change their flesh makes to a somewhat monotonous *menu*. If ordinary precautions are observed, they are not difficult to approach, especially by those who have had any experience of deer-stalking in Scotland. They are usually seen in small herds of six or seven, and

occasionally a single animal is met. They are very inquisitive, and if great care and caution is exercised, a skilful hunter may succeed in shooting every beast composing the herd—so long as the hunter remains concealed after he has fired his first shot. On being alarmed, they will bound away for about two or three hundred yards, then stop and look round in the direction of the report; seeing nothing perhaps but the smoke of the rifle curling upward, and one of the herd stretched motionless on the ground, they will trot quietly back, when another shot will be obtained and another beast fall a victim. And this may possibly go on until the entire herd is slaughtered.

Reindeer are always to be found during the summer months in Arctic lands. It is presumed that they hibernate or possibly succeed in finding a scant subsistence on moss or lichen that has not been covered by the winter snow; but I am under the impression that their existence during the winter is most likely due to the amount of fatty substance they are able to acquire during the summer—in other words, they subsist by consuming their own fat. When met with during the month of June, they are so thin, and their flesh is so rank, they are hardly worth eating; but as the summer advances, the reindeer begins to put on flesh, until the fat on his haunches is over three inches in thickness. A good stag at this time will weigh about 200 lbs.

Musk oxen inhabit territories that are practically inaccessible to the ordinary sportsman, therefore it is unnecessary to allude to them. Neither whalers nor yachtsmen visit the regions where these animals are to be found.

If the remarks I have made, regarding the ordinary sport to be obtained in the Polar regions, are of any value or of any interest to those inclined to adopt my advice, I shall consider myself amply repaid for inditing them.

TROUT-FISHING IN THE BREGENZERWALD

BY MARY HOWARTH

No one would go to Austria, Germany, or France for the sake of the fishing only. But if a holiday is to be taken in July and August—the worst months in England for anglers—and Norway is not possible, a trip to the Vorarlberg should not be despised. There is in such a valley the charm of absolute novelty. Just as the man who rents a first-rate salmon river in Scotland likes to go to Norway for a thorough change, although he cannot match his own fishing there, so the trout angler, who in England would not be satisfied with anything but the finest fishing, with fish not less than one pound in weight, is delighted to present his fly in Austrian streams to tiny trout, that have probably never seen such a luxury before.

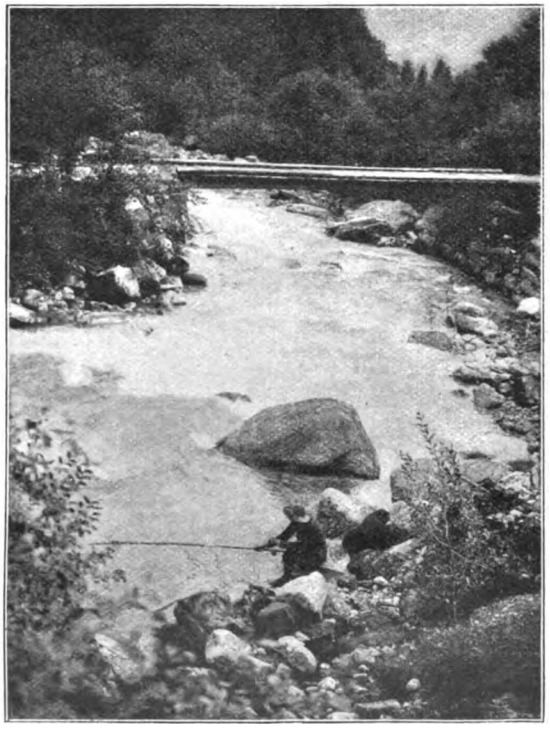
That part of the Vorarlberg which is called the Bregenzerwald is a valley that runs up into Austria from the shores of Lake Constance. It is interesting to note the distinct line of demarcation between the Bavarian town Lindau and the Austrian Bregenz, both on the lake, and only half an hour by boat from one another. There is something mediæval about Lindau, which is a beautiful specimen of an island town. But get to Bregenz, and there is an Eastern European air about the place. The churches have the pumpkin-shaped domes common in the Vorarlberg; the streets are wide, with Italian-looking colonnades, and there is the fair white look over everything that one connects with the

East, as opposed to the solidarity and stoniness of the West. Starting from Bregenz, after a wide plain has been traversed, from which the snowy Alps of Switzerland are to be seen, peaked Sentis a prominent foreground, the road leaves the plain and the railway, and proceeds by means of a steep incline into the heart of the Bregenzerwald. Last summer, mine host of the Oesterreichischerhof in Bregenz expressed a fervent hope that

REUTE NEAR MELLAU

the projected railway up the Vorarlberg, as far as Bezau in the middle of the valley, would soon be an accomplished fact. It would, he explained, bring so many tourists. We on our part devoutly hoped the opposite. The valley is now known as a knapsack holiday ground. From the pass at its summit, pedestrians—principally Austrians and Germans—make their way from Bavaria to Lake Constance. The entire length of the valley is only about thirty-six miles; the road is good, though not sufficiently smooth for comfortable bicycling, and there is this added fascination, which probably few wayfarers know, that

on the other side of the river—that is to say, the one opposite to the road throughout the length of the valley—there is a second footpath which leads in the same direction as the road, over flowering meadows and upon hillside escarpments. Thus the walker who is tired of the road may, by crossing the river by means of one of the quaint, completely covered bridges, find rest and change for the sole of his foot upon the springy turf.



FISHING THE MELLENBACH

We will imagine that we have passed through the numerous little villages between Schwartzach and Bezau.

What impressed me most as I drove through them for the first time was their theatrical aspect. Time after time I encountered Lyceum 'sets,' and felt that I myself was taking part in some mediæval romance of the Faust type. The inns, with their outside carving, sometimes with their coloured emblazonments, their balconies overflowing with the brightest flowers, the quaint high double sets of steps by which they are approached, and their buxom proprietresses, each one clad alike in the

common valley costume, are irresistibly scenic in effect. The village wells, the regiments of tall poles surmounted by absurd little cots which they call starling houses, the picturesque men wearing the gaily coloured slouch hats of the Tyrol, with the prankish *federbusch* at the side, and often, behind one ear, a flaming carnation—apparently their favourite flower—and more perhaps than all these, the elaborate, large, and beautiful signs which protrude from every inn, make a series of pictures from which Mr. Hawes Craven, or one of his brethren of the scenic art, might have taken direct subjects for the Lyceum and the Haymarket and other stages in London. I caught myself thinking many a time that these people had copied our stage pictures. The idea is grotesque, but none the less haunting and amusing.

The party of which I formed a member went to the Bregenzerwald, not knowing where to stay, and pitched upon the unassuming Gasthaus Zum Adler, in Mellau, as its headquarters. There is a larger hostelry in the same little village, to which are attached the baths common to every small place in the valley. We were glad that this place was full; for, try as we might throughout Austria, we could not have been more completely comfortable than we were with the farmer-innkeepers of the Adler. Quite half of the inn was devoted to a huge barn, which was visible from the interior, while a great part was occupied by stables and storage places, and also by a shop. This mixture of purposes is common all through the Vorarlberg. I never saw any quainter inns than these, not even in the rougher parts of Norway. Everything was absolutely clean; the cooking was dainty and delicate, Viennese in character rather than German; and as for the people of the inn, the kind old mother, Frau Wüstner, her daughters Christine and Katherine, her sons Matthias, Peter, and Martin, and the handsome *knecht*, though I personally could not speak one word of their curious German, I felt to be lifelong friends from the first half-hour I spent with them.

We speedily discovered that we might fish as much as we liked upon one vital condition; also that the sons of the house, particularly Peter, were keen anglers themselves. They had never seen flies before; what they fished with were worms or grasshoppers. Their rods were crude poles, innocent, of course, of reels. Peter, who was extremely anxious to learn English, and took every opportunity of airing the few words he picked up, always referred to 'grasshopples' as his favourite bait, and offered to catch as many as we wanted, but we preferred our flies, sometimes, I must admit, with the savoury addition of a

FISHING FROM THE BANK

'grasshopple.' The weather was for the most part very hot and bright, frequently with a fine westerly breeze. The fish did not usually take freely until after one o'clock in the day, but they did not seem to object to the glaring sun, and came so obligingly to our flies that we felt sure the novelty was charming to them. The flies we used more than others were the March Brown, Alexandra, Governor, Coachman, Olive Dun, and Red Spinner. The March Brown and Coachman did the most execution. The one condition referred to above was that we should bring home our catch alive. The consequence was that a tub had to be carried slung across the shoulders with a leather strap, and the fish popped in the water. Every five minutes or so this water had to be changed for the sake of the fish, and that was, of course, rather tiresome. When the fish were got home they were put into a tank, part of a little running stream, and were fattened up for the table. Every other evening at dinner we had a large dish of trout. Katherine was very anxious to know which way we liked them cooked best; but as all ways were good, and we did not understand her definitions, she must have been rather confused by our expressions of decision. She took to giving them to us by turns cooked in the three ways she knew. At the end of our stay the dear simple folk asked us in all sincerity how much they owed us for the fish. We endeavoured to explain that the sport had sufficiently paid us, but as we could not find a word in the German dictionary to signify 'sport,' we were obliged to fall back upon the pleasure that it had been to us to catch them being sufficient compensation.

The fishing in the Bregenzerach is divided into different portions, and let on lease to different landowners along its banks. These leaseholders are able to give permission to friends to fish in their own water. While we were fishing at Mellau, up and down the Bregenzerach and in the Mellenbach, a mountain stream which joins the Bregenzerach at Mellau, ours were the only rods upon that portion of the river, with the exception of the pole wielded occasionally by Peter, and by one known to us as 'Snails.' Snails kept a snail farm in the vicinity; there were several profitable institutions of this kind about, but we were informed that the valley people themselves do not eat snails. They send their fat produce to Bavaria or the North of Italy, where such dainties are appreciated. As far as we could learn there were no other English people fishing throughout the whole length of the valley, which shows how unaccustomed these trout are to anglers with the fly, and therefore how good, within its limits, the valley is for the sport.

The water in the Bregenzerach and Mellenbach is mostly rapid, thick or clear according to the weather, and about Mellau and above there are few pools. Fishing is readily done from the bank or by wading; there are naturally no boats. An energetic member of the party, anxious to make up his score to a good round number, and having found some beautiful water off a small place called Bezau, was, on his last day in the valley, surprised by an elderly inhabitant of Bezau, accompanied by an elderly gillie, who apparently resented his presence. Our ingenuous youth displayed his full barrel of trout, and with ready bonhomie showed the two men his rod and his excellent flies. The gentlemen were pleased, but quite firm in their expressions of displeasure. The youth had no ticket to show and no words with which to explain his ignorance of the limits set upon him. The gendarmerie were mentioned by his assailants, quite good-humouredly, but with reiterated meaning, and he was eventually obliged to abandon what had been one of his most favourite pieces of water. Up to that day we had met with no opposition wherever we chose to fish.

I had forgotten to mention that a very striking peculiarity of the Vorarlberg is that it is a green valley. There are absolutely no grain crops there of any sort. The whole place is devoted to hay, of which two, and in most parts three, crops are gathered in during the summer. I think this is one of the reasons why the valley is such a restful place. Its air of simplicity and unanimity of purpose is delightful, and the different colours of the verdure altogether charming and refreshing to the eyes. It is a symphony in greens, contrasted with the greys of some of the mountains, particularly of the Canisfluhe range, the whites of the snow patches, and the mingling of all three in the rivers.

Peter and his brothers were naturally very much occupied over the haymaking while we were there, scything the lush grass and the flowers that grow between, the blue gentian and the purple colchicum, or meadow saffron, beneath the shadow of the great pine-trees. But one evening while we were dining, Peter came into the room, as was his occasional wont, tidied up for the evening, to invite us to go trout-netting in the morning. Six o'clock was the hour appointed; the people are early risers there. The men of the party were told to put on the oldest of their very elderly clothing, and it was intimated that the ladies would have to watch the operations from the bank. In the morning, full of purpose, we went down to the Bregenzerach, accompanied by Peter, Martin, and

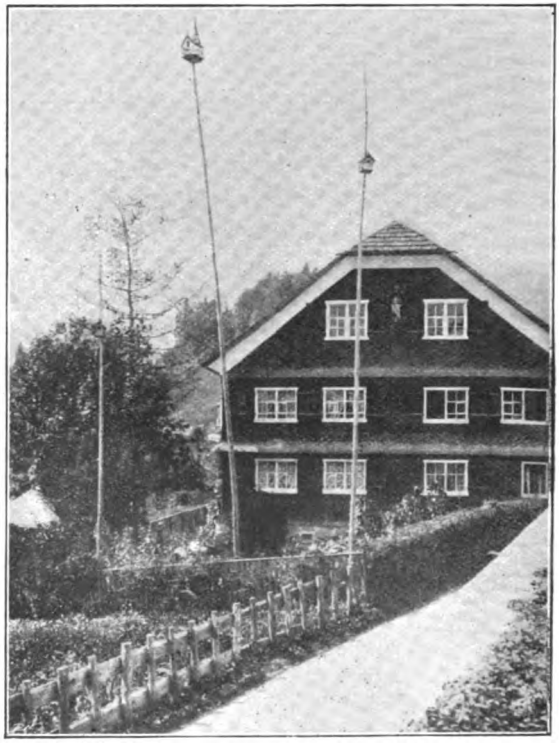
Snails. Three of the men leaped into the river and held in front of them large nets. Young Martin and Snails also leaped in, a few yards in front of the stationary three, and literally pounded through the water towards the trio, beating the stones and all inside the little pools with long sticks as they went, most vigorously. When they got up to the trio the three raised their nets suddenly, and took out from them the poor fish that had been frightened into their last haven. This beating of the water they performed for a very long distance at various points, sometimes with success, at others with none. After two or three miles of it we came home to breakfast, and the fish were deposited in the inevitable tank. I

NETTING THE RIVER AT MELLAU

have seen a good deal of salmon-netting in Norway, and have been terribly grieved and sometimes enraged at the sight of fine monsters that might have been lured by the fly, entrapped in this unsportsmanlike manner. This trout-catching I found more amusing than annoying. Anything funnier than the leapings and shoutings and beatings of the ordinarily shy and conventional Martin and the energetic Snails I cannot remember. The extremity of Peter's joy over the fish caught, some five of which went to make a pound, was delightful; indeed, the exuberance of gaiety of those village people was at all times completely fascinating, especially to one used to the gravity and repression

of the Norwegian, whose satisfaction, even at a large haul of salmon and sea-trout, finds no expression in words or jollity of behaviour. I do not say that Austria is Norway to me; I only mention one of its pleasant points, and one, I should add, of many.

It was a complete change simply to sit in the doorway of the Adler Inn and watch the life of the village, which, to a great extent, culminated at that point, owing to the fact that the well and the church were exactly opposite. Down from the steep



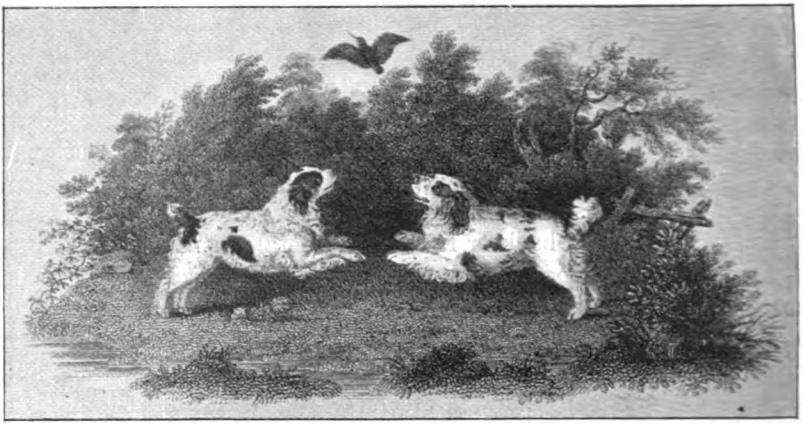
STARLING HOUSES

mountains and their remote hamlets came the pack-horses, heavily laden with jingling bell-fringed collars, and with highly coloured tarpaulins over their burdens. On Sundays there were often church processions to watch. These paraded that portion of the village which included the church and the inn, and a few houses. They were full of colour, brightness and gay, but profound, devotion, like everything else, at any rate on the surface, in that happy valley—happy, innocent, and hopeful.

I have already mentioned in passing that the women wear a

common costume. It consists of a closely knife-pleated dress, hanging from a sleeved yoke. The pleated part is made of black, shining linen, which is very stiff and crackly when first put on, but is worn until it is perfectly soft, brown, and even frayed at the edges. The yoke and sleeves are suitably chosen for occasions; upon gala days coloured and embroidered velvets are worn; upon ordinary occasions plainer stuffs and linen. The waist is belted with black, clasped back or front with metal or silver ornaments, which touch of elaboration is repeated upon the yoke. With the costume go a large black apron trimmed with black lace, a wisp-like black tie for the throat, and a stout petticoat trimmed with green or red cloth cut in vandykes. Brightly coloured stockings and shoes are worn on Sundays; but on week days the custom is to walk barefooted. The headgear worn is just as curious. There is a cone-like black cap of woven wool for the winter and bad days; a flat, sailor-like hat, also black and trimmed with flat bows, for the summer, and I have seen a fur-edged cap, presumably for very cold weather. The unmarried girls in church processions and for festivals wear a very extraordinary gold crown, brilliant with tinsel and in shape much like an inverted hollow pudding dish. It is mounted on to a stiff circlet of black velvet and tied beneath the hair at the back with black velvet strings. Every woman arranges her hair in the self-same way. It is parted in the centre, plaited into two long strands, crossed and twisted round the head. A snood of black ribbon completes the coiffure. There is an old tradition in the valley, which has been passed down from mother to child for hundreds of years, that long ago a horde of Swedes came down upon the peaceful villagers. At that time the black dress was white, and the women, armed with hay implements, forks and the like, rushed out upon the Swedes and so frightened them that they were utterly routed. The wicked insurgents saw in these intrepid women a band of angels. From that day, in memory of the triumph, the women changed their white robes for black ones, possibly with the idea that if the Swedes came a second time they might again appear in their angelic costume. Also, to this day, every church bell in the village rings at two o'clock to remind the people that at that hour, hundreds of years ago, the Bregenzerwald was saved by its women from a terrible disaster.

Many other traditions and superstitions are to be discovered in the valley, but he who wishes to learn them must be able either to read German or, better still, to understand the odd dialects spoken in the Bregenzerwald.



TIMUR THE TARTAR: A MEMOIR

BY G. H. POWELL

He was always a fighting dog was Timur. Not a quarrelsome one, you'll understand; quite the reverse, as sociable and agreeable an animal as you ever saw.

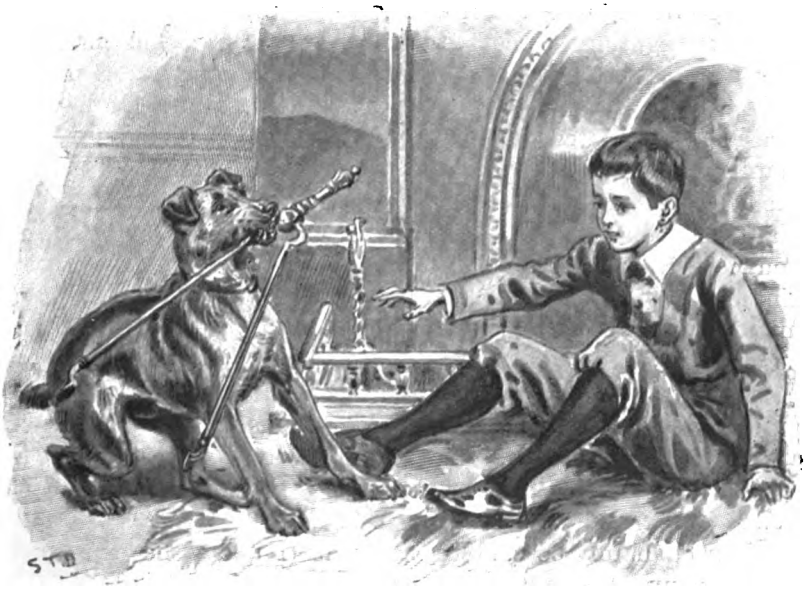
No one more easily led, especially (for he was something of an Absolute) when he had his own way. An excellent and charming companion, too. Even when a puppy he would play with you, if he thought you wanted entertaining, till every bone in your body was tired and your arms black and blue. Or, if you preferred to sit still, he would lie in the corner, quiet as a lamb, slowly and carefully pulling your slippers to pieces, like the inquisitive and intelligent dog he was, to see how they were made. For the mere pleasure of gnawing, one's most precious manuscript or the family Bible would have been all one to him. He only wanted something to sharpen his teeth on; and sharpened they were, at whatever expense to others or personal pain to himself. I don't fancy you would see finer teeth in any museum of carnivora. When his mouth was pulled open, to show envious human visitors, he would growl ferociously by way of illustrative accompaniment, as who should say, 'This is what I do when I bite,' smiling all the time, after a forgotten poet's simile 'like a fourteen-pounder.'

His 'canines' recalled the horns of a rhinoceros or the

scythes on Boadicea's war chariot; and I have known him pull the tongs out of the grasp of a well-grown boy.

For an Irish terrier, a hardy breed, Timur was a trifle large, with the legs of a hare and the courage of a lion that has not yet seen man. He could fly, almost like a bird, up the face of the steep sandcliffs near his original home, and would jump a six-foot fence standing, if there was any bloodshed to be done on the far side; for warfare, as has been reluctantly admitted and as his name implies, was always our dear Timur's *forte*.

I have been told that this is not a special characteristic of well-bred dogs of his kind; and this is perhaps the place to say



that in expert opinion he was not really well-bred. He boasted no long descent, and his ancestors were unknown *as* his ancestors (there are *mésalliances* in the greatest families) to the records of Kennel Clubs. Of his 'points,' technically speaking, I know nothing; but there did not seem to be many that other dogs could lay hold of. Sometimes—*once*, that is to say, in the lifetime of each of them—they sniffed at him scornfully; I believe, on account of his inferior birth. After that, if there was any sniffing done at all (and to one or two that first sniff was also about the last), *he* sniffed at *them*, and they cowered or passed by 'delicately' as Agag with an apologetic 'We needn't fight every time, need

we, Timur, old man, and isn't it a fine afternoon?' sort of expression, that was hysterically comic.

The simple truth was that he could eat up any dog of his weight in the county, and they knew it. Timur, in fact, took care that they should know it. We always believe that somewhere at the back of his kennel, where lay his small but precious hoarded capital of bones, he kept a register of all the dogs within driving distance, and 'ticked off' those that had been properly licked, duly entering the puppies or new immigrants who had yet to be attended to. It was a serious and responsible business, one could see, and weighed upon his mind a good deal; but he was the sort of dog that, if he made up his mind to go through with a thing, would go through with it, if he had to get there in pieces.

As to fighting, of course everyone knows quarrelsome curs that yap and brawl at every street-corner. Timur never yapped and never brawled; rarely gave tongue, in fact, unless to signify that he had sighted game, or for some other reason required your attention. But he never wasted time or breath in requesting the attention of an enemy. One moment he would be all smiles, playing with a child and a tennis-ball on the lawn; the very next you might hear a sudden scuffle, and there in the bushes was Timur, rolling over and over in death-grips with No. 1, or it might be No. 25, who had insulted him last Tuesday week and never apologised.

All dogs, of course, fight more or less; but he made it the business and pleasure of his life. He had mastered the principles and *finesse* of the thing. He knew how to seize and hold the fore-paw, to shift his bite, to split the bone, &c. &c.—details which other dogs have to pay to learn.

It need hardly be said that he was (I quote the expression from a young lady who afterwards became the adored bride of his owner) 'Death on rats.' She told me, being a sporting sort of girl, that she had once seen him in a pit with sixteen of them. She did not know how they (the rats) came there—'some rats live in pits, don't they?'—but she did think the way they disappeared was 'just lovely.' 'How did they go?' I asked, in the presence of a small company of visitors. 'Oh, over his shoulder,' she replied, with a bright and winning smile, '*like a string of sausages*'! [*Tableau:* followed by explosions of laughter, also of somewhat factitious disgust; everyone really feeling that these five words hit off all the poetry of motion.]

Rats, one somehow feels, were perhaps made to be killed; at least, they are treated as enemies by the most humane people.

And if Timur's mouth, in the limited area of a pit, really had a sort of magnetic attraction for them—like the music of the Pied Piper—why, at any rate, he did their business with more humanity than the vermin-killer of the celebrated legend.

It is different with the harmless, necessary cat, which most of us regard with approval, and many with the warmest affection.

The subject is not a pleasant one; but if the reader cares to know it, Timur habitually threw his cats a trifle high—five or six yards, more or less, according to weight. This, you see, just gave him time to take a long breath before the second part and conclusion of the performance—in plain words, the 'worry,' after which the cat may be said to have ceased to exist, as a cat. Indeed, you would not have been surprised to see its remains flying to the four winds of heaven. To follow the shaking of his head at that awful moment—a thing must be done quickly, Shakespeare somewhere says, if 'tis to be done well—would dislocate the elbow of a kinematograph. In significance Lord Burleigh's famous nod would be a field or two behind. What it did mean was briefly the watchword of Timur's terrestrial existence—'*No cats!*' A world clear of Felidæ was what he asked, and indeed got, but for an occasional inch or so of tail vanishing skywards or round a corner at the rate of thirty miles an hour.

Speaking with rough practical accuracy, you could no more get a cat into his presence than a lighted cigar into the rotunda of the British Museum. It was *défendu*, *verboten*, or what you will. I repeat that I am not justifying this trait, which I have sketched as briefly as possible.

Cat-killing may not be a virtue, but it would be absurd in any memoir of Timur to pass over or ignore his practice in the matter. After all, if the veracious biography of an eminent divine cannot be completely published without scandal, how much less that of a poor sinful dog!

What prevents me from here condemning his conduct more strongly is a profound belief—shared, I believe, with some of the most eminent scientists—in physiognomy. Timur does look so good. A newly consecrated archbishop, a Nonconformist minister just introduced to a peer, could not, if I may say so, *beam* with piety and goodwill more than Timur does immediately before and after actions that the cold hard world would stigmatise as immoral; which convinces me that there must be another side to the matter, which we cannot see. Some people, indeed, describe this phase of his conduct as 'sickening cant,'

and his demeanour as altogether too 'Pecksniffian.' But this is scarcely consistent with the 'whole-hog' thoroughness of the rest of his character.

For myself, I may perhaps be allowed to say that I have an equally warm affection for both *sexes* (if one may call them so) of the friends of man. Knowing Timur from his youth up, and having grubbed at the same rabbit-hole with him by the hour together, I yet could not pretend to understand all his aversions. Several times I have held him firmly by both fore-paws, gazing into the liquid depths of his yellow hawk-eyes, and inquired, in all seriousness, why he disliked cats. I never got an answer, simply because Timur was always so overcome with emotion before the end of the question that I believe he would have left both his fore-paws in one's hands rather than listen unmoved to that detested monosyllable.

When you come to think of it, there is no real certainty that he liked dogs much better.

If he had a vice, no doubt it was ambition, the love of crude despotic power. High-handed tyranny, in fact, many would have called it, for he demanded something like absolute submission. Many dogs conceded this, by lying down, or by a certain significant droop of the tail. If they didn't, as has been said, he would fight them for it. It is easy to see that, to other dogs, he must have appeared in the light in which Julius Cæsar is so vividly represented by Shakespeare—an individual whom it would be right, on public grounds, to assassinate, if only you could get together people who would do it. In fact, we know—and, of course, he knew—that there were conspiracies against him; and the knowledge may perhaps have caused him to draw the chains of subordination tighter than he would have done.

As to the lying-down, which became a degraded sycophancy in some curs, it is not clear that Timur ever made it an essential. But on the carrying of the tail half-mast high he was adamant.

Exceptions, of course, were made in favour of a few genuine old friends—Bimbo, for example, the small woolly retriever who lived in his yard, in an adjoining kennel, and helped to keep the fowls in order. But there, again, all was not perfectly plain sailing. For example, if Timur were unchained first, instead of rushing away, as dogs commonly do, he would always wait till he saw Bimbo out of the yard. The reason was simplicity itself when you knew it. As a capitalist who had accumulated a really fine lot of bones, some of them months old, he distrusted Bimbo—a

thoughtless, Skimpoley sort of dog, who had no principles and took little heed of the morrow.

And one fine night last summer there ensued a dreadful scene, some idiot of a new footman having put the dogs into their wrong kennels! At least, he had got so far as to put Bimbo, nothing loth, into Timur's, and no farther. Forthwith the enraged proprietor and the interloper met in the very storehouse and strong-room of the former; and there was a noise as if the infernal regions and the first murderer had been suddenly elevated (as a racy American metaphor has it) to the level of the upper world. This reached us before the butler opened the door of the smoking-room on the second floor, and panted forth to his employer, 'Could you come, sir? The dogs are fighting.' This with a frantic struggle to preserve the *convenances* of the servants' hall, deranged by such actuality as Timur's. Then, breaking down into the mere heart-broken appeal of man to man, '*I* can't separate the brutes.'

Without a word the owner donned a shooting-jacket and a pair of old fives-gloves, and I followed him downstairs to the yard —not the stable-yard, but one in which a dejected-looking horse revolved all day on cobblestones round the axis of a pump which supplied the house with water. There we found a pallid crowd of domestics ranged at a respectful distance round the roomy kennel in which the two dogs were fighting like one mad dragon with five heads, fifty claws, and a hundred gleaming teeth. Bimbo made a very fair match of it, being so deeply involved in fluffy hair that an opponent, if not choked, had usually some difficulty in finding the exact outline of his body.

But the cracking of a heavy dog-whip and summons addressed to the two delinquents in a heraldic voice of thunder, produced after a while a slight relaxation of the fray. Before, however, the owner could drag them out—torn, bleeding, and decorated with handfuls of each other's hair—it began again, as if at an after-thought of Timur's that there was a useful place where he hadn't bitten Bimbo. The owner got that after-thought, or most of it, on the sleeve of his velveteen coat.

Any other fellow would have been very angry; but he is the sort of man who could find sermons in stones thrown at him, and good in the most unpromising phenomena. Of course, he gave Timur a hiding, but Bimbo had a worse one.

'It's all very well, my dear fellow,' he said to me, 'for you to theorise; but if you'd been saving up a lot of old bones for a month past, and another chap got in and froze on to them,

you wouldn't take it so dashed calmly.' This argument was unanswerable. Secondly, he pointed to the remorse of Timur, which was indeed obvious and overpowering. Not only did it stop the fight at once; but for days afterwards that dog went crawling about in dust or ashes, like a serpent just out of Paradise, simply begging people to spurn him with their feet.

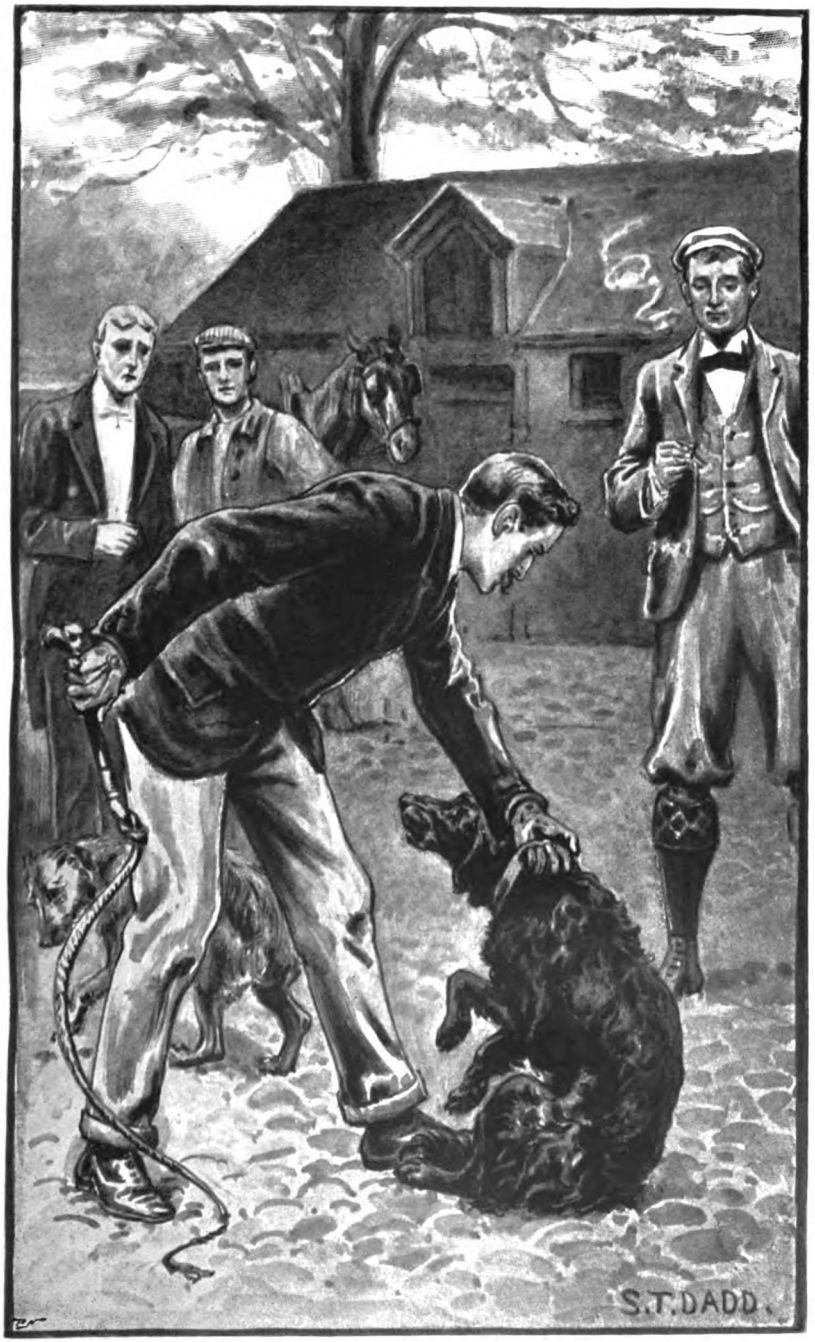
That alone should show how strong was his moral sense; and of his good-temper, as has been said, there can be no doubt. But it would be absurd to say that his general policy and line of conduct was a popular one. It wasn't even meant to be; and people—people who couldn't admire ambition or independence in a dog—were constantly turning up and saying in one form or another, 'Look here! your—*double-blanked*—dog has been mauling my colley again!' or, 'Your—*three-starry*—terrier has half-killed one of my spaniels'; and you could only apologise humbly, as the owner always did, when the case was proved (he was obliged to hold a sort of brief for his dog, of course, or they would have made it out a public nuisance), and say, 'Well, I hope it will recover; and I've given Timur' ('adding an oath,' as the Greek poet says) 'a *h'm-h'm'd* good-hiding.'

If he had a rag of a case to argue, he would open by suggesting that it (the other dog) had bitten Timur a fortnight back, which made the matter seem less one-sided.

What really did irritate him (and would have irritated a mediæval saint) was that at the moment when he said, with proper solemnity, 'I gave him a *h'm-h'm'd* good hiding,' Timur—who, of course, was close at his heels—instead of looking miserable and repentant, would always grin in a particularly fatuous manner and wag his tail, as if to say 'Yes, that is so;' which, coming from him, suggested to a suspicious mind that the whole apology was a collusion and a fraud.

There was some point in the other argument, accepting the premisses; for if there is one fact quite certain concerning Timur, it is that he never forgave an injury. Forgiveness is a pleasing virtue that prettily adorns civilised humanity; attached to canine life, it is not, in vulgar language, found to 'wash,' and Timur worried along without it.

Well do I remember when a certain testy old colonel, who had taken a place about a mile off, met us once on the drive and said, with what pretended to be a not vindictive emphasis, 'Well, my Lion has given your terrier a dressing he won't forget in a hurry.' 'No,' rejoined the owner sadly, but with a smile which struggled hard not to be significant, 'I dare swear he won't.' The colonel seemed a bit mollified, or a bit puzzled.



HE GAVE TIMUR A HIDING, BUT BIMBO HAD A WORSE ONE

It was the day after the poor dog had come home in such an awful state that we had summoned the 'Vet.' to attend to him. That functionary, ignoring the academics of his trade, assured us Timur had the 'constitution of a rhinoceros.'

Turning up the patient's yellow hair, and observing the number of marks, he inquired as to the proportion of quarrelsome dogs in the neighbourhood. We said we were afraid there were a good many, and that our Timur, being a virtuous and law-abiding character (as he was, if you let him make the laws), they

HE MANAGED TO LIMP HOME

all made an enemy of him. At which the 'Vet.' smiled, pocketed his fee, and went away.

We were all as certain as if the matter had been sifted by the stewards of the Jockey Club, that that hulking brute 'Lion' had taken him at an unfair advantage. There was a bush, behind which Lion used sometimes to sit, by the side of a road along which Timur occasionally took one of his solitary walks. There was also elsewhere a low wall on which Timur was once or twice observed to sit some two months after his mauling, and which, as it happened, overlooked a road along which Lion walked at least once about the same date.

In some Natural History books you may read that one dis-

tinction of the canine tribe is that they do not lie in wait for their prey. We are in possession of facts that disprove this, but they will not be made public until Lieut.-General Flagband (as he now is) has left our neighbourhood. It was a question doubtless of art against brute strength. Very likely, to judge from the result, Timur had jointed one of Lion's clumsy limbs for him before the latter realised that there was a fight going on.

That afternoon we were out driving with the girls, and met our convalescent some little distance along the high road. He managed, with indomitable heroism, to limp home after the wagonette.

The other dog was carried.

One more incident to show the solidarity of our hero's character, and I close this sketch. All his friends are now agreed that it was a mistake our ever attempting to 'show' Timur. He is not an ostentatious dog at all. And we had no materials for his pedigree beyond the mere suggestion of friends who have seen him jump, that there would be a kangaroo or two in it somewhere.

Not that Timur minded being shown, except for the preliminary combing, which he bore like a martyr on the grill.

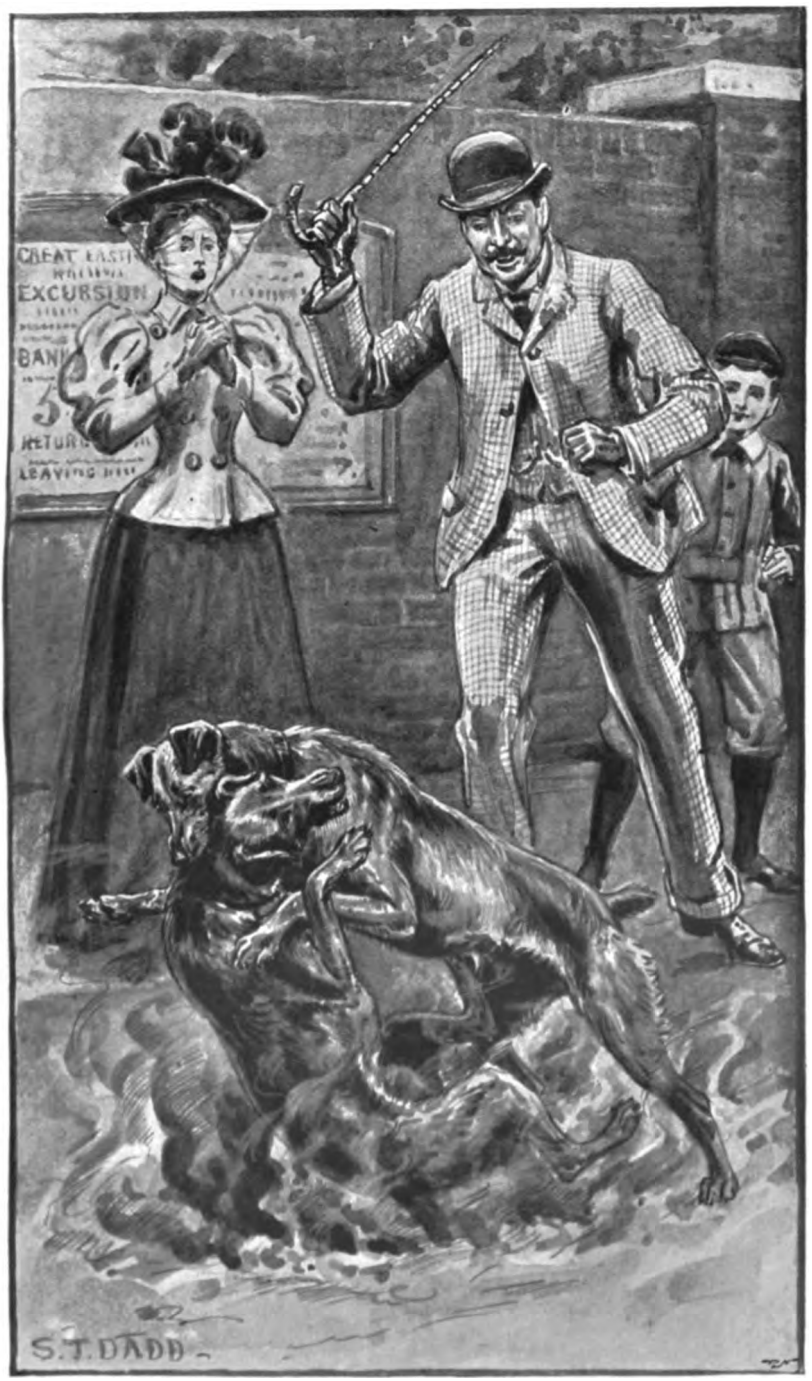
It was a local exhibition—the Upper Fiddleton 'Second Annual Dog-Show.' It was really the first, but they called it the second, because the committee, who were mostly shopkeepers of the place, thought it was better for trade.

His master had to go to the City that day, so I took Timur to his place early, so as to avoid possible disturbances, with a new collar, in which he really looked very well.

But the judges would have none of him. They said, smiling politely, that he had 'no shape;' and we overheard one critic comparing our noble dog—as he stood up to stretch himself—to one of those toy sheep on wheels that squeak when you pinch the stand. This alluded to a slight roundness or humpiness in Timur's figure, which came, no doubt, from his habit of doubling himself up (when running fast) in such a manner that his head and shoulders completely disappeared between his hind legs and his forepaws came out somewhere on his back.

I suppose he could have given two hundred yards to every dog on the premises, and rolled over it in a quarter of a mile; but there would have been no use in endeavouring to explain that.

'You see, your dog hasn't got any points,' said a connoisseur



TIMUR CAUGHT HIM

to one of the girls. At that moment Timur yawned prodigiously in the idiot's face. 'What do you call those?' she asked, a trifle irritably. 'Oh,' said the man feebly, 'not an ill-tempered dog, I hope.' 'Rather not,' was her reply.

But there are limits to the endurance of man and beast. Most unfortunately in the very next pen or compartment was the prizewinner of the whole show, and of many others—an oiled and curled darling, fresh from a drawing-room—Mrs. Slopinger's 'Rollo,' by 'Cardinal,' out of 'Satanita,' &c. &c., who not only walked away from all competitors, but had a special paragraph of commendation in the report.

There was quite a crowd of well-dressed spectators, especially ladies, round Mrs. Slopinger's 'Rollo,' who kept exclaiming, 'What a sweet pet!' 'Oh, the love of a dear!' &c. &c. (not a very good thing for any dog), while they only looked at Timur for the purpose of making invidious comparisons. Some spectators, indeed, turned round to say, 'Poor Timur!' 'Poor old dog!' At such well-meaning persons he only sniggered with distant coldness. Timur's 'snigger' is a faint suggestion of clearing the teeth for action, nothing more, but it doesn't look pretty.

The husband of Rollo's mistress, a heavy sort of British merchant, made some remark (a great literary effort for him) about 'Beauty and the Beast.'

'Really, you should say that to his face,' I suggested mildly. The man was standing right in front of Timur, who was listening all he knew, and looking hard through the bars at Rollo and at the crowd round him.

Mr. Slopinger guffawed stupidly. 'Afraid it'll make him jealous? Eh? He can't 'ear. Haw! Haw!'

I only replied with biting irony that our dog was, of course, a common out-of-doors dog, but had his feelings. All the time this wax doll of a prize-winner was parading up and down with his tail in the air, as proud as a peacock, within two yards of Timur's nose!

'Your dog's staring very hard at dear Rollo,' said Mrs. Slopinger, with an inane attempt at kindness, 'as if—he! he!—he wanted to be more like him.'

'I'm sure I don't know how he'll manage *that*,' I said, merely for the sake of saying something. Besides, it was quite true; I didn't—not just then.

A moment later I caught Timur's eye, and he gave a frightful grin. He often did grin when he caught one's eye.

But I certainly noticed a little change in his demeanour. At

first he had shown a mere tacit acquiescence in the show. After all the fuss and talk and gesticulation about Rollo, I noticed that he seemed a trifle bored. He would throw up his muzzle as one came by, with a gesture that said in large print, 'Get this foolery over as soon as you can. There's something I want to do.'

Mrs. Slopinger, the next time she came up to pet her darling, was condescending enough to reflect that our Timur had had a rather trying afternoon of it.

'He looks quite neglected.'

'Yes,' I said, 'but he can take care of himself.'

'And Rollo *is* a *picture*, isn't he?'

'Yes,' I assented, with a similar emphasis on the tense 'he *is*.' Just round Mrs. Slopinger's skirts I could see Timur, grinning again as he shook himself. It was just time for closing the show.

Never shall I forget the remains of that afternoon. It was next year the committee made the regulation that all dogs should be brought to and from the show in chains, like convicts.

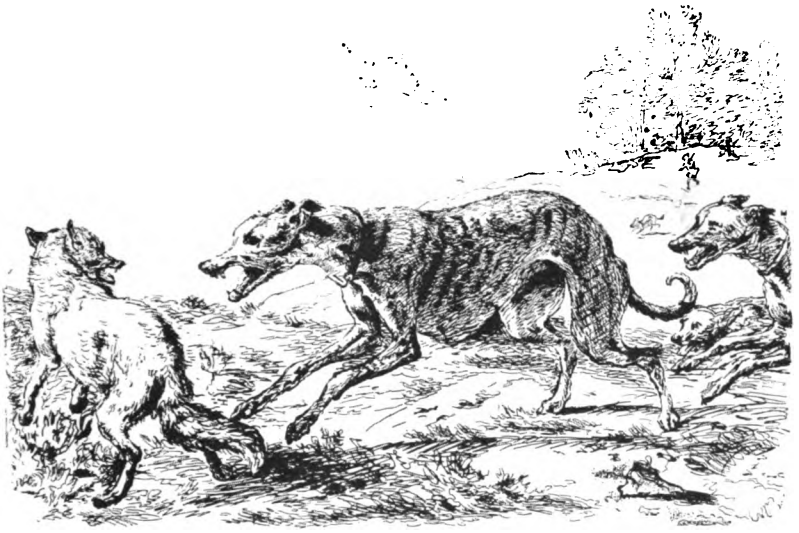
Rollo came out first with his mistress, and went, as is plausibly alleged, for a good run. Our idea is that Timur, who is the soul of honour, gave him as far as the corner of the Station Road to get home in, if he could.

He couldn't; and consequently, just round that corner, Timur caught him, and they fought amid such a shindy—chiefly raised by the prize-winner, who certainly had powerful lungs—as soon brought the greater part of the show-gathering together again.

It wasn't much of a fight in other respects, but it put Timur in a good temper with himself for a fortnight afterwards.

I have since thought that Mrs Slopinger was not altogether wrong about what was on his mind during the show. But there were, of course, two ways of diminishing the dissimilitude between himself and the darling pet whom he had watched being worshipped all that weary afternoon. *One* was to effect certain alterations in the general outline and figure of the precious Rollo. These were carried out at once in Timur's own practical and expeditious manner.

I am not sure whether poor Mr. Slopinger thought his wife's dog such a 'beauty' after that. I am sure both he and she thought Timur more of a 'beast' than ever. But he isn't.



THE TURF

BY ALFRED E. T. WATSON

CRICKET, the national game, is played on the green sward, and so is football, which some enthusiasts are inclined to rank no less highly. Whatever may be the nature of the bunkers, sand or otherwise—I have passed considerable periods chopping about fruitlessly, if not 'aimlessly,' in a quarry—golf links are constructed on commons, and the Royal and Ancient Game has myriads of devotees. Nevertheless, when one speaks of 'the Turf' the picture called up to the mind's eye is invariably that of the racecourse, of the green strip along which, between the crowd on either side, the horses sweep towards the winning-post, bearing their jockeys in their gaily coloured jackets, some with their arms in the air as their whips rise and fall in threat or coercion—often it is only the former—some 'riding with their hands,' whirling them round and round like windmills if they are inexpert, or with a forward thrust, a backward draw, holding their horses together, keeping them balanced, giving them at once freedom and support if they are masters of the art—as about five in a hundred are.

To employ the term, therefore, is to speak of racing: that is what people understand by 'the Turf,' about which nothing is more remarkable than the different ways in which different people

regard it. To some it is 'a gigantic instrument of national demoralisation;' to many the glorious national sport, an unfailing source of deep interest and keen excitement; to others a perplexity, for they cannot understand why its denouncers are so bitter against it, nor what there is in racing to render it a subject which its devotees are never tired of discussing. The shoeblack at the corner of the street will ask the shrill-voiced newspaper boy who is vigorously crying out 'Winner!' what that winner is; and with a Derby dinner every year at Marlborough House, with the Prince of Wales a prominent patron of the Turf, with an ex-Prime Minister so ardent a supporter that he will go to a meeting to see a cast-off from his flat-racing string run for a hundred-pound hurdle race (as Lord Rosebery did the other day), it is equally a matter of constant interest in high places.

Of course, whether racing is interesting or not depends upon the eyes with which one looks at it. Several years since I dwelt on this subject, and confessed freely that to see a number of horses gallop up the straight, till one of them shoots out and passes the post in advance of the rest, must be mild entertainment for a man who knows and cares nothing about the competitors, and does not appreciate the niceties of horsemanship, to study which is a constant delight to many. But—if I may be excused for reproducing something which I formerly wrote on the question—supposing you have watched the careers of the different horses; have always believed that your favourite strain of blood would assuredly tell; that the introduction of a bad cross in the mealy chestnut had been a fatal mistake; that Jack Smith did not know how to finish; that Tom Jones was a perfect horseman, who was certain to win if his horse were only good enough; that Brown, the trainer, always overdid his horses, with other scraps of knowledge and information—then a race is surely full of interest. Here they come! Smith in the scarlet jacket, riding his hardest, whirling his arms round like a windmill instead of keeping his horse balanced for a final effort. Tom Jones, in a jacket with white and blue hoops, on the contrary, is nursing his horse carefully, and you watch for the moment when he will put the question to the test. See! Brown's horse has stopped from want of stamina, just as you guessed it would before the race; that fatal cross also tells—just again as you felt certain it would—and the mealy chestnut will not or cannot make an effort. Will Smith get home after all? He is leading nearly a length half a dozen strides from the post; but see! Jones is coming! Just in the nick of time his whip is raised, a couple of cuts urge the

PREPARING FOR A TRIAL ON THE LIMEKILNS

horse forward, the hoops flash past the scarlet jacket, and Jones is home first by a neck. To the man who watches a race with eyes that observe all this, the spectacle has a delight of its own.

Is it not so in all games and sports? The powerful but clumsy cricketer pulls the ball across his wicket, but sends it a long way, and the ignorant onlooker is just as pleased at the spectacle as he would have been at a well-timed cut; the inexpert golfer hits anyhow, his ball flies a hundred yards, and our friend who knows no better thinks it very skilful; whereas to the artistic player the total absence of swing and style is a shock like that of a false note to a sensitive ear.

As for the 'national demoralisation' theory, it is a pity that the Puritan and Pharisaical condemners of the Turf should think of it, as they do, only in connection with its convenience as a medium for betting. Gambling is a passion, a vicious passion, deeply and, it is to be feared, ineradicably implanted in the men of nearly all nations, and it will out when opportunity occurs. The Chinese do not race, but they gamble enormously; the Spaniards know next to nothing of the Turf, but 'pelota' and a dozen other games take its place so far as speculation is concerned; and one might run over the sports and pastimes of all countries, and find that the same mania prevailed. In England cricket-matches and boat-races between the most exclusive clubs used to be for large money stakes, and men betted heavily on them. If racing were abolished, cricket, boating, football particularly, and other media of speculation would supplant it. Assuredly wagering would merely be transferred to other fields, and not diminished; it is a pity this should be so, but so it is. Probably there is more betting on racing than there used to be, for the reason that the subject is much more discussed than was formerly the case. Two bi-weekly papers used to satisfy requirements; now several dailies and many weeklies are devoted, or mainly devoted, to the Turf, and the great dailies, not to speak of evening journals, give it far more space than they did twenty or even a dozen years ago. It is specially amusing to note that some of the organs of the Puritan party which most shrilly denounce racing nevertheless publish the results of races, and while virtuously abstaining from anything in the nature of what are called 'tips,' carefully record the betting! Is not this hypocrisy? The most narrow-minded and hysterical of modern organs, the 'Daily Chronicle,' is an example of this, and as for the absence of 'tips,' there are very few papers in which they are not incentives to loss.

Of the ninety members of the Jockey Club, about half keep horses in training, about half of these again never bet, or bet so little and so seldom that they certainly do next to nothing to support or otherwise affect 'the ring,' and the majority of these last never bet at all. A large proportion of owners who do not belong to the most exclusive of clubs (unless in using the superlative I am under-estimating the Royal Yacht Squadron), and many very regular frequenters of the racecourse, ardent devotees of the Turf, have no dealings with the bookmakers. This is particularly the case in these days of large stakes.

'Have you backed your horse?' one sometimes hears an owner asked.

'No,' is the reply. 'It's scarcely worth while. You see I'm taking 40 to 1, for the race is worth a thousand, and it only costs a pony to run.' And in many stakes the prize is in more liberal proportion. Owners pay rather over 100*l.* for the prospect of winning 10,000*l.* in three yearly events—the Princess of Wales', the Eclipse, and the Jockey Club Stakes—with the further advantage that, if they find their horses are not good enough to have a chance, they can withdraw them at various intervals for smaller payments; and on the other hand there are liberal compensations for running second or third.

'Does anyone ever win from the bookmakers?' a judge was sufficiently ill-informed to ask the other day, as if the ring would exist were it only a pool into which men threw money year after year with no prospect of return. Many men win, but few keep their winnings—that is the vast pull the bookmakers have, because, as I have before shown, to win a little, as a general rule, merely induces men to try to win more, to bet higher, till the almost inevitable period arrives when bad judgment, mistaken calculation, indiscreet confidence, that little knowledge which is never more dangerous than on the Turf, and the numerous other causes which men sum up and fatuously describe as 'bad luck' lead to losses which set them wildly endeavouring to 'get home,' so adding to their liabilities. But men often win from the ring—for a time at any rate—and the large number of reputable bookmakers pay with scrupulous honesty, exactitude and punctuality.

In truth, there are many interests in racing apart from the attempted finding of winners for speculative purposes. The turmoil of the ring, the laying or taking of 6 to 4, is altogether forgotten as one visits the paddock on some sunny spring morning and notices the long-legged foal looking inquiringly at the

strange world around him as his dam sedately crops the succulent herbage. With her almost shaggy coat and bulky outlines she is a very different-looking creature from the sleek filly in whose shining quarters you could almost see your face reflected as she stepped out on to the course a few years since, her intelligent ears pricked, and bent her neck to the gently restraining hand of her gaily clad rider as she cantered to the post; as she returned at speed up the straight, going easily with her head in her chest while whips were cracking around her, until a dozen strides from

LA FLÊCHE AND FOAL
From a photo by Clarence Hailey, Newmarket

the post her rider let her out and she cantered home without an effort. The sire, too, is a famous horse round whom exciting memories cling; and to see what the little creature, offspring of the pair, will prove, is a question replete with interest. Few men are judges of a foal, and, indeed, foals alter strangely and with really marvellous rapidity when they once begin to feel the sun on them and to share their mother's meal of the young spring grasses. He does not look much, certainly, to the untutored eye with his big joints, thin neck, long legs, wisp of a tail, and coat rough like a donkey's; but the expert will note that he stands truly on his

feet, that his shoulder has the right slope, that his back has more breadth than a casual observer would suppose; and he is a friendly little thing that comes up to you with his mother and sticks out his nose inquisitively, wondering what sort of an animal you may be, but not resenting your presence. Shake your handkerchief at him and he will take a little canter round, with a frolicsome kick or two, and return to his dam's side to have another look at you, coming close up afterwards, for you don't strike him as alarming, to investigate you with his nose.

'He'll make a very nice horse!' an experienced trainer who has had a multitude of young ones through his hands says presently, and if you are fairly modest, you wish you could see with his eyes and detect points in the rather shapeless little creature that are hidden from your observation. If you have had some slight experience yourself, you probably say little, or make some more or less casual remark; if you know nothing at all about it, you most likely express your opinion freely, and say a number of particularly stupid things.

As a yearling some eighteen months later he does not look much, perhaps, when, adorned with an elaborate bit and a rather clumsy saddle, he is first backed. You are inclined to think him cobby—wanting in length and quality; but when his daily canters have reduced his bulk, and he begins to look like a race-horse, with a leaner neck, some muscle on his quarters, and a development of second thigh—when, too, you note that he strides along freely in his work, gets his hind-legs under him and reaches out with his fore-, you grow enthusiastic: to have your hopes dashed or confirmed when at length he, with one or two of his companions, is put by the side of an old plater, who is set to give the young ones—of whom you have concluded that your favourite is the best—21 lb. over half a mile. How will it be? This is one of the most exciting moments an owner knows; for too often the good-looking, beautifully bred, perfect mover goes in admirable form for three furlongs, and then begins to sprawl about hopelessly. Visitors to the training ground, mounted or on foot, detect a couple of jockeys in colours, and two more in their shirt-sleeves, leaving the string and riding down in the distance, and it is seen that some horses are going to be galloped. 'Whose are those?' 'Do you know what they are?' men ask each other as they go towards the place where the trial is evidently to finish. Then comes the cry, 'They're off!' and the augmented group gaze eagerly to see, let us hope, the old one beaten a hundred yards from the temporary winning-post, and the once odd-looking little

foal, now a shapely racehorse, cantering at his ease past the extemporised winning-post.

Then it is that the proud owner goes home to breakfast happy, and looks through his 'Ruff's Guide' to refresh his memory as to what races the colt has been entered for, afterwards glancing at the 'Calendar' to find a selling race into which one of the others, badly beaten, had better be put with as little delay as possible.

There are certain subjects upon which lovers of the Turf are constantly arguing without any nearer approach to agreement. One of them is as to the relative capacity of horses now and in former days, and particularly as to whether they stay as well as they used to do. Comparisons between horses that run at periods of many years apart are really impossible—the more so as in former days there was so much looseness of statement as to what horses did. That Eclipse galloped a mile a minute—and that, moreover, for minutes at a time—was a very generally accepted belief, for which common sense assures us there could have been no vestige of foundation. Anything faster than a mile in 1 min. 40 secs. is altogether extraordinary; and it may be doubted if—under the most favourable conditions, of course, of ground, and of every other conceivable aid to pace—a mile has ever been covered in five seconds under this figure. It is reported that an American horse called Sensation, sire of an animal now running in England, galloped a mile in a fraction over 1 min. 35 secs., having, if I remember aright, a flying start. This was accepted as what is called 'a record' in the United States; and, supposing it to be true, it very likely is so.

One would be interested to know the shortest time in which various distances have been covered, though the system of timing actual races, which has a few supporters in this country, is futile and utterly valueless; and that for several reasons. In the first place, the state of the ground has a considerable influence on the time which races occupy; atmospheric conditions have their effect when the question of fractions of a second comes to be considered; and then, again, there are some courses with easy and others with severe gradients, as also some straight courses and others with turns round which horses must slightly slacken speed. Another reason why time must of necessity be untrustworthy is that horses are not started from the precise point at which the nominal distance of the race really begins. The Rules of Racing declare that they must be started 'at such reasonable distance behind the starting-post as the starter thinks necessary.'

foot, that his shoulder has the right slope, that his their
more breadth than a casual observer would suppose; e, and,
friendly little thing that comes up to you with his oreover,
sticks out his nose inquisitively, wondering what s shortest
you may be, but not resenting your presenc ry day we
handkerchief at him and he will take a little c iously bad
a frolicsome kick or two, and return to his good ones.
another look at you, coming close up afte not have gone
strike him as alarming, to investigate you ence of actually

'He'll make a very nice horse!' an ed in covering the
has had a multitude of young ones the St. Leger course.
presently, and if you are fairly mod XII. took 3 min. 45 secs.
with his eyes and detect points he course itself, though I
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As a yearling some e son. And Zeller in 1878 took
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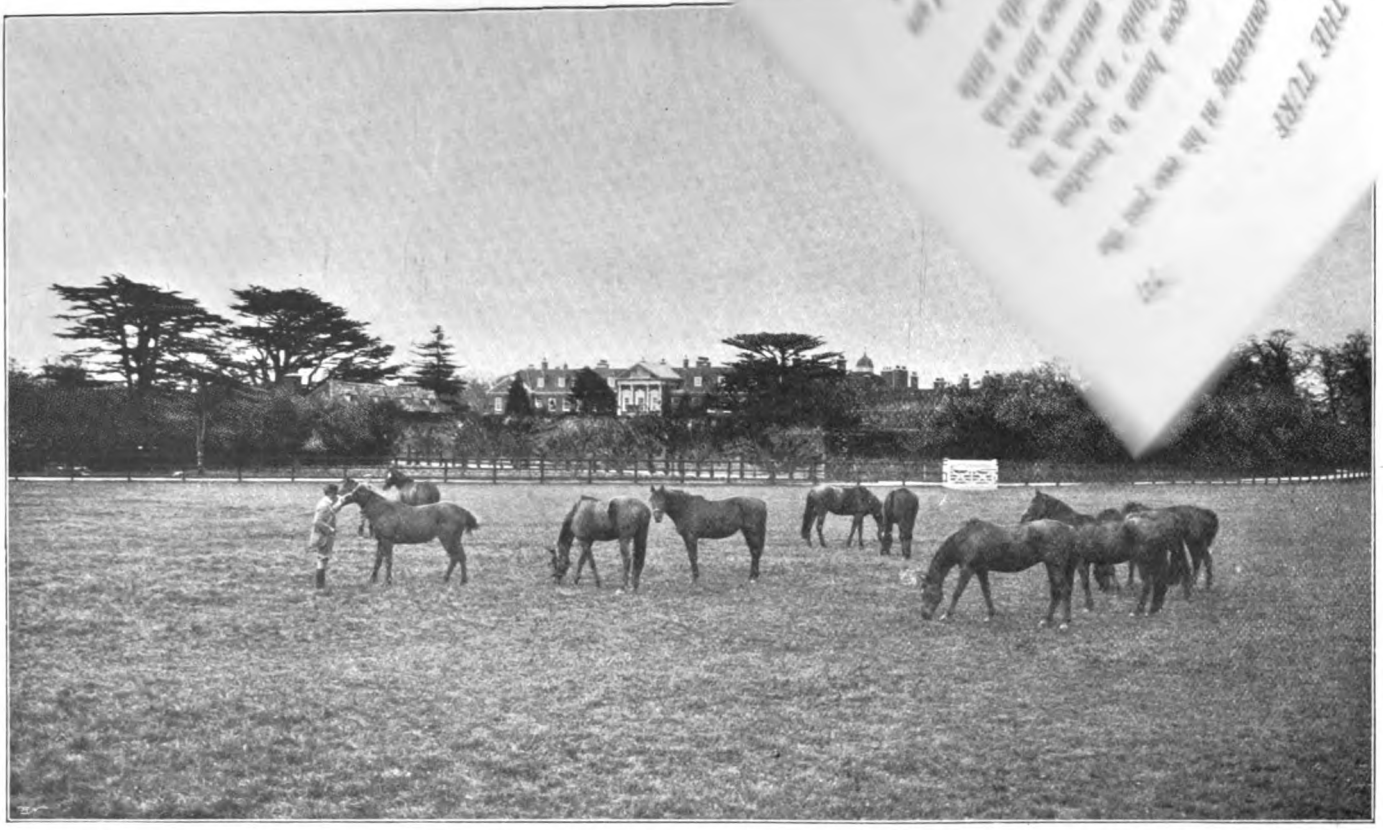


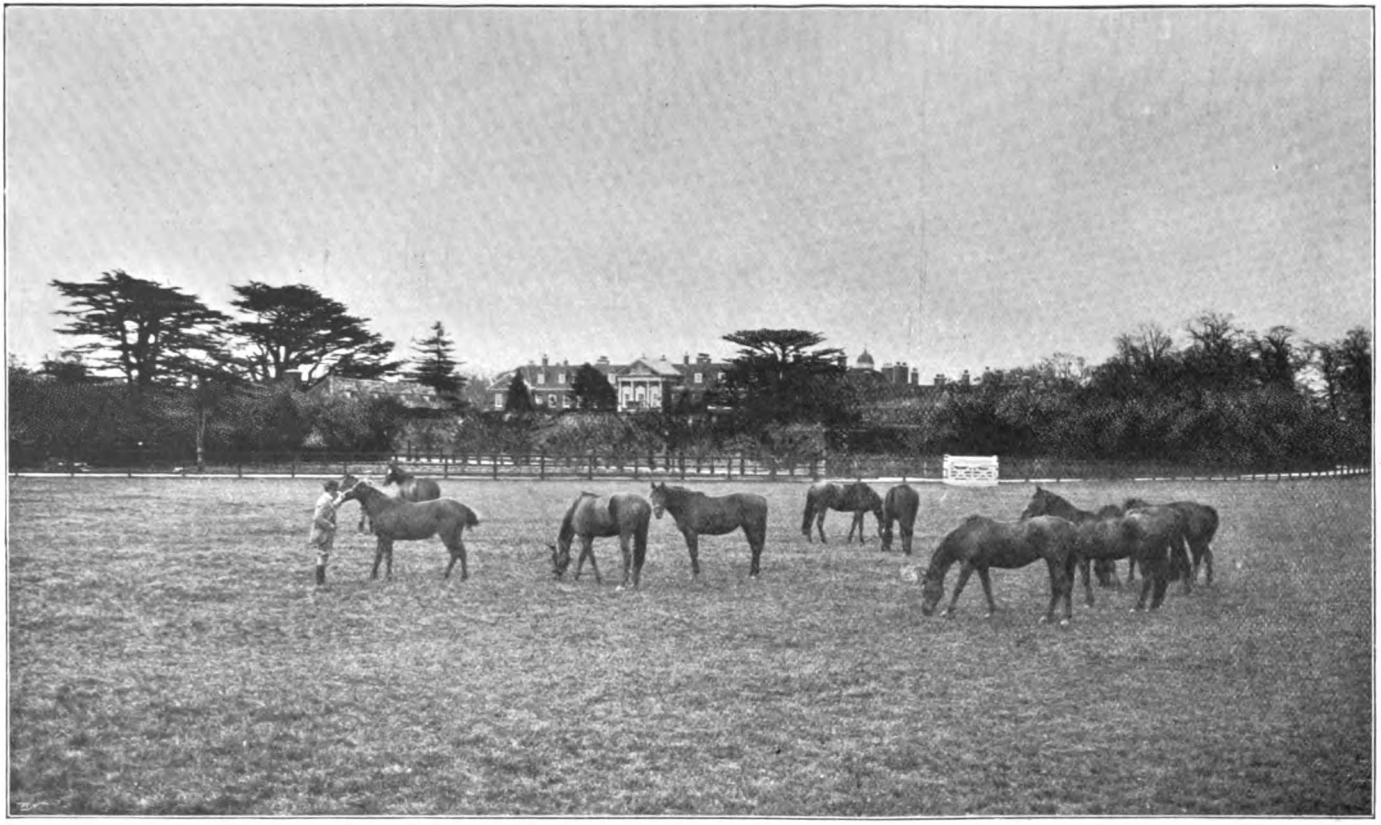
FAMOUS MARES AT CHEVELEY PARK

THAIS, IRISH CAR, ALICANTE, DEAREST, GOLIGHTLY, PLAISANTERIE, NANDINE, BROAD CORRIE, LAODAMIA

We continually see the jockeys called back; they turn their horses often when a good many yards behind the line, and, if they are then let go, they run that much further. Moreover, it is not the object of racing to gallop distances in the shortest possible time, but to pass the winning-post first. Every day we see and hear of 'slow-run races;' and we find notoriously bad horses making much better times than unquestionably good ones. The best horses often 'win in a canter,' and so cannot have gone at their utmost speed. There has been a difference of actually more than half a minute in the time occupied in covering the mile and three-quarters and 132 yards of the St. Leger course. Seabreeze took 3 min. 11⅘ secs.; Charles XII. took 3 min. 45 secs. There was, I believe, some change in the course itself, though I do not know that there was any in the actual distance, between 1839 and 1888, the years in question. But actually the same ground was traversed in 1838, 1839, and 1846, and the times were respectively: Don John, 3 min. 17 secs.; Charles XII., 3 min. 45 secs.; Sir Tatton Sykes, 3 min. 16 secs.—very close indeed to half a minute's variation. And Reveller in 1818 took 3 min. 15 secs. exactly.

As for staying now and formerly, horses used to run three and four miles, and they very seldom indeed do so now. There is one three-mile race, the Alexandra Plate, every year at Ascot, and in some years a match for the famous 'Whip' over the Beacon Course, 4 miles, 1 furlong, 177 yards, and that is all. Horses were formerly trained to stay the long distances over which they were to run; they are not trained for such courses nowadays, but if it were necessary to train them, the general opinion of experts is that stayers would be found to do all that their predecessors ever did. There is a suspicion that horses, as a rule, went very slowly in these long races; they do so now in most events that are run over a couple of miles or so—the Cesarewitch excluded, for this handicap is nearly always run at a good pace, because there is invariably a large field, and it is sure to be advisable for some of the horses that stay well to go from start to finish; the light weights, perhaps with missions to make running, perhaps in order to take advantage of their easy burdens, or possibly because the horses get out of hand, always 'bring the field along.'

That the tendency is to breed rather for speed than stamina must be admitted, and there can be little doubt that the main object of racing would be furthered if stouter blood were more consistently sought. Racing cards nowadays certainly contain



FAMOUS MARES AT CHEVELEY PARK

THAIS, IRISH CAR, ALICANTE, DEAREST, GOLIGHTLY, PLAISANTERIE, NANDINE, BROAD CORRIE, LAODAMIA

an undue proportion of five- and six-furlong races; for even at Newmarket the prosperity of the sport depends upon the co-operation of owners. Most horses, if they can do no more, can 'get' these short distances at a fair pace, and, with lenient treatment from handicappers, have the chance of winning in turn. Owners, therefore, desire these 'sprints,' and what they desire they necessarily have. It would no doubt be an excellent thing if there were no five-furlong races at all for any horses but two-year-olds, and if the Jockey Club could do what they wished, the abolition of these scrambles would soon be decreed; but the primary object of all conductors of racecourses who draw up programmes—except, perhaps, at Ascot, where the cards approach the ideal—is to attract good fields. There are more weeds than racehorses in training; infirm animals that would not stand a preparation for a long race can be got ready to gallop a little over half a mile, and five-furlong races consequently remain.

An ideal Turf, with sound horses (of three years old and upwards) racing over never less than a mile, with an abundant supply of skilful jockeys, and handicappers at once competent and painstaking, adjusting weights for horses that have always been ridden out, and finished as near to the winner as was consistent with merciful consideration for beaten animals, is a pleasant dream; but the condition of affairs is a great deal more healthy than enemies of the sport imagine. Rogues there are, and others, not quite rogues, perhaps, who sail as near to the wind as the strict laws—liberally interpreted—permit. A little more—occasionally a good deal more—activity on the part of the Stewards is very desirable. At times one notices something suspicious, one hears it afterwards remarked that 'So-and-so rode a very curious race?' some critic, more outspoken, states his conviction that the horse was 'not having a go,' but the thing is allowed to pass. When such suspicions are rife the Stewards can scarcely help hearing them, even if they have noticed nothing, and it is most essential that inquiries should be made, that dishonesty may be exposed for one thing, and for another that, when a reasonable explanation is forthcoming, unfounded doubts should be dispelled. In such a composite body as the Turf it would be a marvel if there was not at least that proportion of rascality which is found elsewhere; but when one recognises who are the chief supporters of racing to-day, the soundness of the foundation on which it rests may be contemplated with much satisfaction by its devotees, and the impartially minded man must conclude that a sport which attracts such men cannot be

very largely compounded of evil. The dozen names at the head of the list of winning owners last year are made up of Mr. Leopold de Rothschild; H.R.H. the Prince of Wales; the Duke of Westminster, a peer who devotes so much time, money, and energy to charitable and philanthropic work; Lord Rosebery, ex-Premier; Lord Derby, a hard-working benefactor to a multitude of institutions in his own county and elsewhere; M. R. Lebaudy, a French millionaire who races according to the best English traditions; Mr. H. B. McCalmont, M.P., a model English landowner; Lord Durham, for a second time a Steward of the Jockey Club, who labours diligently for the good of the Turf; Mr. L. Brassey, a member of a distinguished family; Lord Stanley, M.P., who at Westminster and in his own neighbourhood admirably fulfils the duties of his station; Mr. J. Gubbins, who was the best type of an Irish landlord till the Land League drove him from his home; and the Duke of Portland. The Duke of Devonshire is a prominent patron, and three Viceroys or ex-Viceroys of Ireland, Lords Cadogan, Londonderry, and Crewe, are *habitués* of Newmarket, as is the Lord Chief Justice of England, to name no more. While such personages as these are keen supporters of the Turf, its enemies, the Anti-Gambling League prominently, whose scarcely disguised mission it is to injure and assail the sport, have a hard task seriously to do mischief and to destroy the reputation of the English thoroughbred horse, whose merit can be proved in no other way except in racing; for the reason that make, shape and breeding do not demonstrate the possession of soundness, speed, stamina, constitution, and the high qualities in which the fame of the animal reposes.

TWO DAYS' SHOOTING IN AUSTRIA

BY G. R. A. F. DUNBAR

THROUGH the kindness of a friend in Vienna I made acquaintance with the owner of an excellent shooting in one of the southern provinces of Austria, in the midst of beautiful scenery, and within a few hours' drive of a railway station. The shooting lodge was most picturesquely and conveniently situated at the head of a long valley, and close to a rapid trout stream. It was small and simple, but contained everything that we could desire.

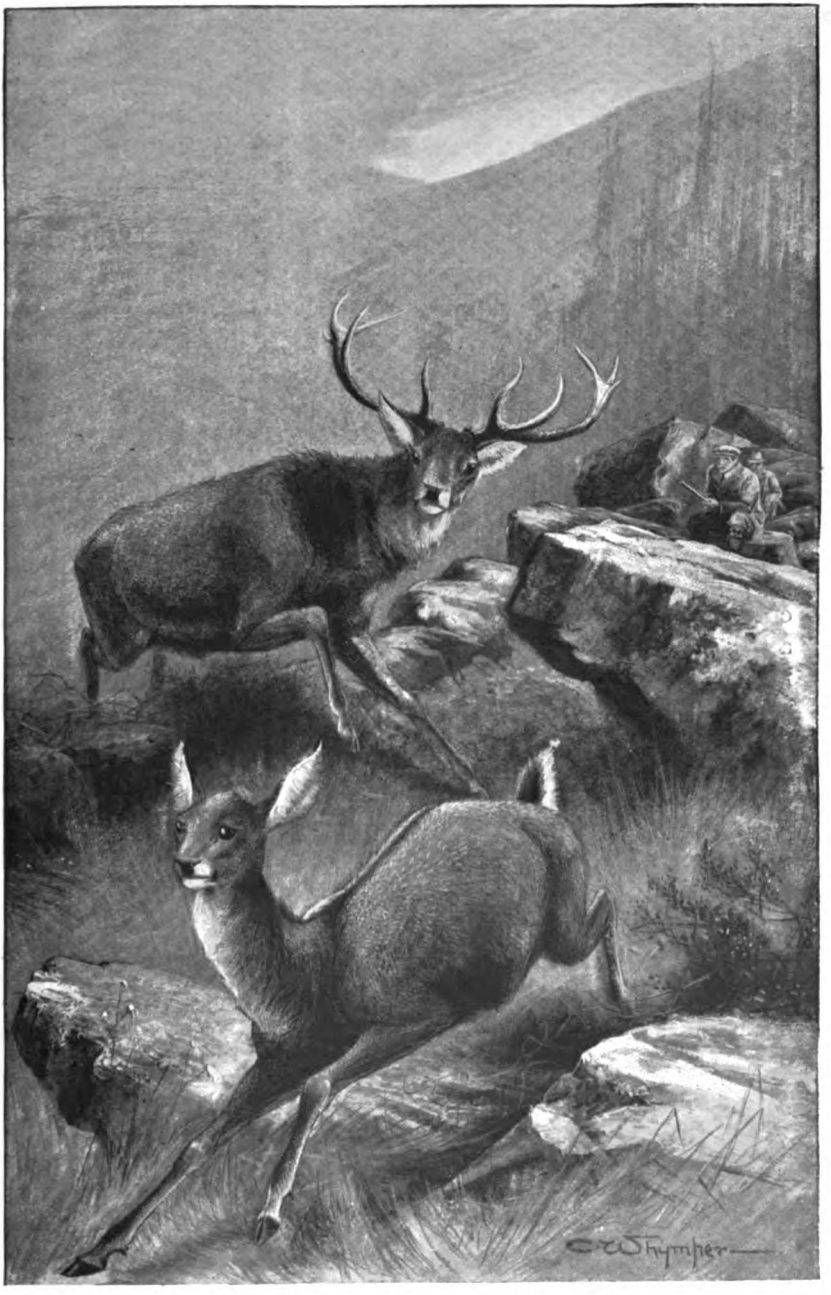
It is unnecessary for me to say that my host was a sportsman —all Austrians are born sportsmen. His father and grandfather were both well known as first-rate shots and chamois-hunters, and the latter met with a tragic and extraordinary death while chamois-shooting. In a drive one day, when he was considerably over seventy years of age, he shot and killed a chamois that was on some rocks immediately above him. The animal in falling started a large stone, which bounded down the mountain side, struck him on the temple, and killed him on the spot, he either not having seen the stone coming, or not being active enough to avoid it—truly a sportsman's death.

My host's sister, a charming and perfect type of Austrian beauty and grace, kept house for us, and the fourth and last of the party was S., a good and experienced stalker and shot, and a most cheery and delightful companion.

'Cäsar' was the name we had given to a stag who hitherto had born a charmed life, and who was well known to the keepers. Two years ago he had been a 14-pointer, and had been missed

by some of the party. Last year he was a 12-pointer, and had again been missed. A day or two after our arrival, towards the end of September, it was arranged that S. should go off and sleep in a distant keeper's house, and try for this stag early in the morning. He did this and found Cäsar, but owing to the wind being adverse he was unable to get a shot at him. The stag, accompanied by several hinds, was to be seen nearly every morning at dawn in a high corrie on the edge of the forest (a deer forest in Austria is what is usually understood by the word 'forest,' and has not the meaning which it has in Scotland), and S. came back with such great accounts of the size of his body and head, that I was overjoyed to be told that it was to be my turn next to try for him; and I believe I played even worse than usual that evening at whist, owing to my thoughts running more on Cäsar than on the cards. It was my luck to be sent out on this occasion with the head-keeper, a fine, tall, upright man of about 6 feet 3 inches, one of Nature's gentlemen, full of that natural Austrian politeness which must strike every Englishman who visits the country. Stalking in this part of Austria is quite a different thing from what it is in Scotland; you have to be on the ground at the edge of the forest by dawn, as the deer return very early from feeding in the open, and when once they have got back into the thick wood it is useless to follow them, and you then have to wait till the evening, when they come out again to feed.

The wind on this morning was very favourable, but after a two hours' climb in the dark we got up rather too soon to where we expected to find the deer, and it was still so dark that I could see nothing at all at 100 yards' distance. After waiting a little for the light, the keeper said he could hear the deer and even see one or two in the distance. I, however, was unable to make out anything, and there was nothing for it but to sit quiet and wait till it got lighter, with the excitement of knowing that Cäsar was probably within shot all the time if I could only have seen him, and the possibility of his feeding away and getting into the forest before it was light enough to distinguish him. But this was my lucky day; I had hardly sat a minute behind my rock, when I suddenly heard and saw a hind come galloping towards me, and, to my great delight, the big stag pursuing her. She passed me only about ten yards off, but the stag, either seeing us or thinking it beneath his dignity to run after the lady any further, stopped suddenly only twenty yards in front of me, giving me a good shot, half facing, half broadside. It was still so dark that it was impossible to make out the sights of my rifle (a perfect double ·303



THE BIG STAG PURSUING HER

by Holland), and knowing from experience that nine times out of ten under such circumstances one shoots too high, I held very low and pulled the trigger, and hit him (as we found afterwards) just about the right place. Cäsar turned round at the shot and bolted back, and I fired the second barrel hurriedly and without effect, although I felt certain my first shot had hit him. He only ran a few yards, however, and then we were delighted to see him stop and fall dead. He was a splendid stag, with a very good head of ten points, the horn being very strong and the points long, and very glad I was to see him lying there and to receive the congratulations of the keeper.

It may interest some of your readers to know what takes place in Austria when one kills a stag, though it has doubtless been described by many others before me.

The keeper first cuts out the two single teeth in the upper jaws, and presents them to you; these are always preserved and kept as trophies, and often made up into buttons or pins; those which are of the darkest colour being prized the most.

Another ceremony is the presenting of the *Bruch*. The keeper cuts off a sprig from the nearest fir-tree, and, sometimes smearing a little blood on it, presents it to you on his hat, saying, 'Waidmannsheil.' You then take it, replying, 'Waidmannsdank,' and place it in your hat; the object being that on your return home everyone may see at a glance whether you have been successful or not, and if you have the *Bruch* in your hat every person you meet greets you heartily with 'Gratulire.' Years ago this presentation of the *Bruch* used to be a much more formal matter than it is now, and the following used to be the correct words spoken by the *Jäger* when presenting it, and by the sportsman in receiving it; they are quaint, and may perhaps interest those of your readers who have been in Germany or Austria, and who understand German. They are to be found, I believe, in old books on sport, but they were given to me lately by a friend.

ALTDEUTSCHER SPRUCH BEIM DARREICHEN DES BRUCHES.

Vor meinem Herrn hin ich tritt
Mit Waidmannsgruss und mit der Bitt',
Er hat ein gerecht' Schuss gethan,
Drum soll er den Bruch auch nehmen an,
Und tragen wohl in Freude,
Dem edlen Wild zu Leide.
Braucht Eure gute Wehr'
Allzeit zu Gottes Ehr!

ANTWORT DES HERRN.

Hab Dank, mein lieber Jäger frei,
Trag' alle Weil der Dinge drei:
Wehr' ohne Schart' und Fehl,
Geraden Sinn ohne Hehl,
Treues Herz ohne Wank,
Habe Dank überall, habe Dank.

The gralloching the stag is performed very much the same as in Scotland, but during the operation on Cäsar, the keeper did a thing I have never seen done before or since in Austria, and that was to take off his coat before setting to work! A Scotch keeper, I think, always takes his coat off; but once when I asked an Austrian Jäger why he did not do so, he replied, 'That would be very unsportsmanlike. I am not a butcher; butchers do that.' I have been told that many gentlemen will not allow their keepers to take their coats off even if they wished to do so, and it is even considered to be clumsy of the keeper to soil his sleeves with the blood while cleaning a stag. During the following ten days I had very good sport, and secured several very fine heads, but none were quite so good as Cäsar's.

A few days later a chamois drive took place, the first I had ever taken part in; and I was therefore most interested in every detail connected with it. The weather was unfortunately very bad and the wind unfavourable, so that the sport was not as good as was expected.

We were a party of six guns, and had a longish but not very hard walk up the mountain before we got to our places.

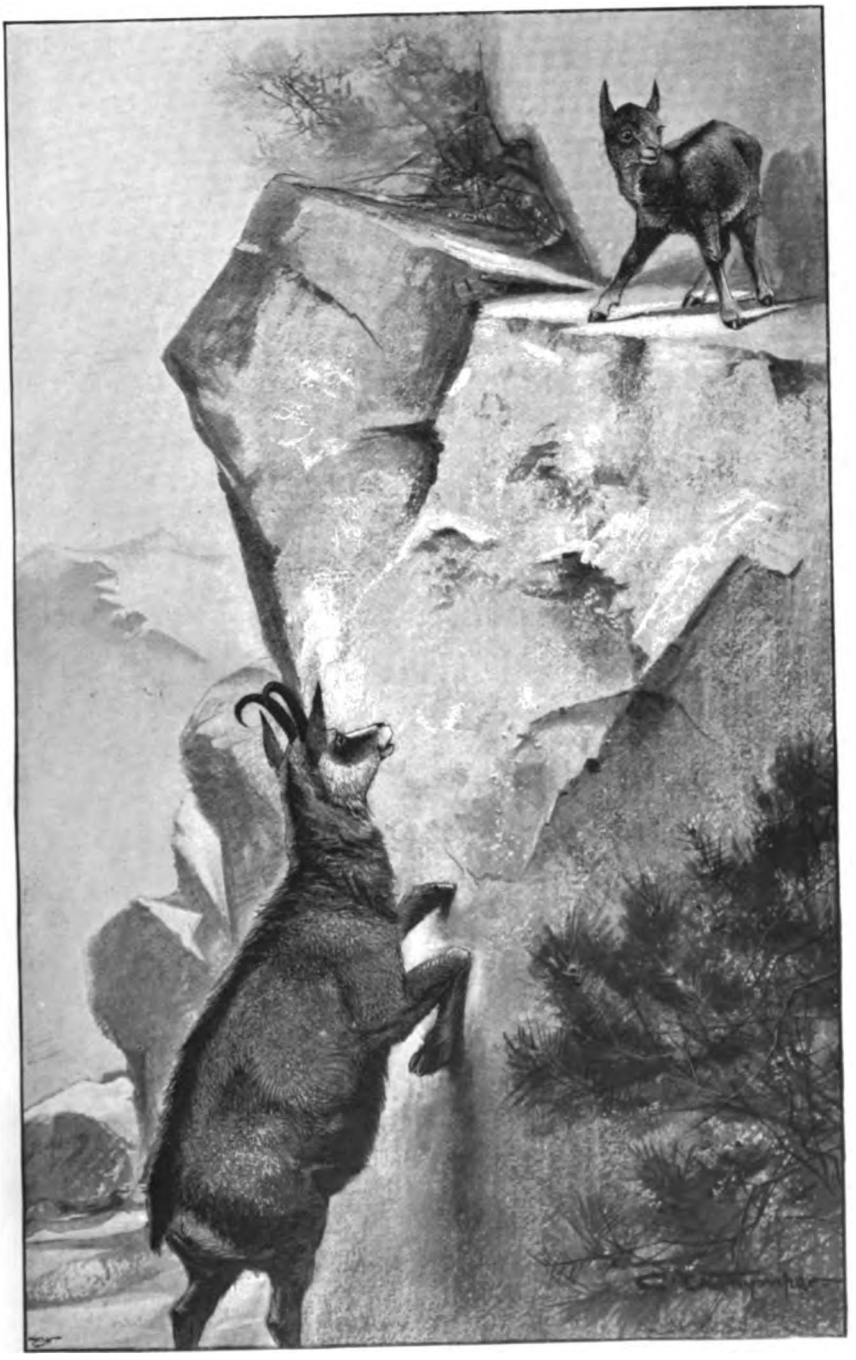
The drivers were to start driving at 11 o'clock exactly, so that everyone had to be in his place, some of which places were much further off than others, well before that time. I was in my place by 10.30, and so was S., who had the next place to me, about 200 yards distant. We were both of us placed on the edge of a very steep and narrow ravine, about 60 yards wide. My post commanded the top of the ravine. Opposite to us the mountains rose a good bit higher, and we were told that the chamois if they came to our passes would probably come over the sky line and make their way down and along the further side of the ravine, giving us good shots. We therefore sat anxiously expectant—at least I can answer for myself. We each of us had a keeper with us who had carried our *Rücksacs*, which held our luncheons, and our *Wettermantels*, &c. We had a full half-hour to wait before the drive began, and were rewarded by one of the prettiest

and most interesting sights and lessons in natural history I have ever seen—namely, the sight of an old chamois giving its young kid a lesson in jumping.

I must premise by mentioning that it is very difficult—in fact, impossible—for anyone but a very old hand to distinguish a buck chamois from a doe as they are moving, and the rule is not to shoot at a chamois if it has a kid with it, as that is a pretty sure sign it is a doe. A few minutes after we had been sitting quietly at our posts, and before the drive began, the keeper called my attention to a chamois' head and neck which had suddenly appeared on the sky line about 150 yards off. It turned out to be a doe with a kid. They came along slowly, not at all thinking of danger, and not in any way as yet disturbed by the drivers, who were a mile or two away, and who had not yet begun to drive. They both came quietly down the steep mountain side until they came to a place where there was a drop of about twelve feet down; and then took place the following beautiful sight, which was also witnessed by S. and his Jäger from where they sat. The old chamois jumped down, as a matter of course, but the kid 'funked,' and would not follow. The old one looked up at it and then went back another way to the ledge on which the kid was standing, and again jumped down so as to show the young one how to do it, and looking up to it as much as to say, 'Come along, you little stupid, it won't hurt you!' But the kid funked again and would not follow. The mother thereupon returned a second time to the ledge and proceeded to push the kid with her head, and made it jump down, and followed it herself. Then came the climax—the old one and the young one both went round again to the same ledge, and the old one jumped down first, and this time the kid followed immediately, having been taught that it was safe and easy enough!

I am told that this is quite a common sight to see when out after chamois; but whether common or not, it was most interesting. The two animals then made their way along the rocks, and passed round the head of the ravine within thirty yards of me.

Soon afterwards the report of a rifle in the far distance told us that the signal for starting the drive had been given, and then began for me the excitement of the drive, wondering whether I should be lucky enough to get a shot. Presently we saw four chamois appear on the farthest sky line. a long way out of shot. The keeper hoped they would turn and come our way, but they did not, and we never saw them again. Almost immediately afterwards we heard the sound of S.'s rifle. 'The gentleman has



A Lesson in Jumping

killed a chamois dead,' remarked the keeper to me. I asked how he knew that, and he said, 'Because I heard it fall down to the bottom of the ravine just after the shot;' and sure enough his keen ears were quite right, and it turned out to be just as he had said. S.'s aim was good, and he had shot the chamois through the heart as it stood near the top of the cliff opposite him, and it had fallen immediately dead to the bottom. The drive was now coming to an end, and I thought all hopes of a shot for myself were over, when suddenly from my right and behind me came a noise and a sight of something which looked through the bushes, which were rather thick just there, more like a great football than anything else as it bounded down and came close to me, and stood still not twenty yards off, but, of course, exactly behind a big spreading tree where I could not possibly see it! I kept quite still, and after a second or two the chamois started on again, and went down the ravine in front and almost right under me. I could only see his back, and had just time to aim and fire before he disappeared, and I was fortunate enough to put the bullet through his spine in the centre of his back; we heard him roll over and over to the bottom of the gorge, from which, when the drive was quite over, the keeper soon brought him up on his shoulders. We then had a long way to walk for the second drive, and I personally had no further chances; but the other members of the party had their turn of luck, and the result was seven chamois and a roebuck, the latter having given me a very pretty shot in a clearing of the forest as I was descending to the rendezvous after the last drive.

I have had many days' driving and many days' stalking in various parts of the world, but two events that recur over and over again to my mind with never-failing pleasurable reminiscences are the death of Cäsar on that early September morning, and the sight of the old chamois teaching its young one to jump.

I would give one word of advice or warning to those who read these lines against the idea that shooting such as I have tried to describe can easily be obtained by a stranger in Austria. If he has no introductions to or friends in Austria, he had better stop at home; but if he has Austrian friends, and if he can speak the language, he will find no country in the world more pleasant to stay in, and no people in the world more charming than the Austrians.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

GOLF always has the credit of being a game of royal surprises and uncertainties. Hitherto our point of view in regard to it has been one of wonder that the veteran brigade, such as Messrs. Ball, Hilton, Hutchinson, Laidlay, Balfour, Melville, and the rest, held their own so well with the younger generation coming on—coming on, yet never seeming to arrive. Of course we had Mr. Tait, but he took some little while in the arriving; and we had Mr. Anderson, but his appearance was a little meteoric. But now, in our latest amateur championship, there has been a really terrible *bouleversement* of the mighty from their seats. Ex-champion Anderson was abroad, and ex-champion Hutchinson engaged with bronchitis; but the rest were all there, and went down like ninepins before the new men. It is a pity that Mr. Maxwell, who so gloriously defeated Mr. Ball and Mr. Hilton on successive afternoons, has his life-work mapped out for him in Australia, so that we shall not see much more of his grand form. But though Mr. Robb quickly beat him, he has done enough already, at the age of nineteen, to establish his golfing reputation. The two that fought out the final, Mr. Allan and Mr. Robb, were both of the new school, the latter scarcely Mr. Maxwell's senior, and the former, the present champion, only about twenty-five. It is quite as it should be that the rising generation should rise. Curiously enough it has been only in the amateur championship that the older school has heretofore succeeded in keeping aspiring youth out of the honours. In the open championship a great majority of the late winners have been quite young men; but that is decided by score play, so that the subtle 'moral effect' of playing against a famous opponent does not come in as a factor in the result.

This Mr. Maxwell is the man who, in the winter, attracted some attention by holing the Redan hole at North Berwick in one stroke. Of course this is not a unique performance, but the Redan is a remarkably catchy hole, with the great steeply-walled-up bunker, from which it takes its name, just before the green, so that it is difficult enough to toft over the bunker and stay on the green at all, much less in the hole. On the old North Berwick course, before its extension, it was common for holes to be done in one, but it was not the Redan hole that was usually chosen for the purpose. As it is now, it is with difficulty reached from the tee. Curious coincidences are recorded about the holing of holes in one stroke. There is a legend that once the same player held both short holes, going in and coming out, at St. Andrews, in one stroke apiece, in the course of the same round. It is at least well authenticated that in a match in which, if I mistake not, Mr. David Lamb had a hand, one player laid his ball stone dead, within six inches of the flag, and the other holed out in one. This is remarkable enough, but perhaps one of the most singular things in the whole history of coincidences happened at Westward Ho! in the old days, when the Iron House stood at the foot of the Pebble Ridge. The sixth hole of the course was then a short one, over the 'Cape' Bunker. For years and years it had stood approximately in the same place, and no one had ever holed it in one, in spite of much good play (the three Allans were daily playing over the green at that time). At length, on one red-letter day, when the hole was to all appearances in no different a place from that which it had occupied for years, it was holed twice in one! The late Matthew Allan was one of those who holed out from the tee, and the other was some very indifferent player, whose name I have forgotten. And to the best of my belief the hole, which was nastily situated over a hog's back, was never again holed in a stroke. Now the course is altered, and the hole does not occur.

From what I see around me I judge that the cycling craze has abated with those who two or three years ago went riding because it was 'the thing.' It sounds paradoxical, but fewer people cycle now because everybody cycles. Men and women went to Battersea Park because they knew that so many others would presently follow their example, and they wanted to get a start, to be able to ride with ease while tardier aspirants were still in the wobbling stage; but now it is no distinction merely to

ride well, to go for long distances without touching the handles, and otherwise to exhibit mastery of the machine. Almost everybody does these things, and it is difficult to find anyone to score off. But at the same time, as just indicated, the world in general is taking more and more to cycling because of its practical utility, because of the pleasure of riding, because of its convenience, because it is such healthy exercise—the stories about special ailments and mischiefs which beset the cyclist appear almost to have died out—and finally because it is something to do, and a vast number of people are chronically in want of occupation. That riding is a vast deal easier than it at first seems to the beginner is proved by the supersession of the tricycle. Who rides one now? We talk of 'cycling,' but 'bicycling' is invariably meant. As for machines, I wonder much what further improvements are possible? One is disposed to think that in some of the best finality is almost reached; and yet when the percussion cap was invented, and the elaborate inconvenience of flint locks abolished, who ever imagined that the marvellously improved gun was not half-way to perfection—that the breech-loader was possible and would prove a vastly greater improvement on the cap gun than that had been on the flint lock, saving the time and labour of measuring and putting in powder, then a wad, then ramming it down, then measuring the shot, another wad, another application of the ramrod, the putting away of that appliance, the feeling for and fixing of the cap, often with numbed fingers which rendered the business difficult? Something may therefore be invented to make people wonder how they ever persuaded themselves to be contented with the best machines of 1897; but I confess I cannot dimly guess what that something is to be.

In the March number of the Magazine last year a friend, Mr. Daniel Cooper, kindly gave me—and I passed on to my readers—his estimate of the three-year-olds. I thought he underrated Regret in placing him so far below St. Frusquin and Persimmon; but he was absolutely right, as subsequent running has unmistakably proved. This year again he repeated his kindness, placing Galtee More at 9 st., Vesuvian next with 8 st. 10 lb., and then Velasquez 8 st. 7 lb. Again I confess that I thought he was wrong, and again he is right; moreover, the handicapper, Mr. R. K. Mainwaring, in the May number, expressed his faith in the son of Kendal and Morganette. Well! I was wrong, there is no denying. It is an undoubted fact that, except in the Middle Park Plate, the performances of the hitherto unbeaten Velasquez were

far more brilliant than those of the apparently not very much more than useful Galtee More, who, when beaten at Liverpool, proved himself the same horse as Brigg, and exactly 8 lb. better than Glencally, with whom he ran a dead heat at those weights. I had seen Velasquez in his stable a few days before the race, and liked him much better than when at work in his clothes; and it was pleasant to find what I regarded as such a good horse so amiable of disposition, for there is not a kinder colt in Newmarket. I was, moreover, influenced by his owner, whose opinion is entitled to the highest respect. 'I firmly believed that he was the best horse I ever had,' Lord Rosebery remarked, after the race for the Two Thousand.

The doubts that were entertained at Newmarket as to his staying were proved to be right. 'There is no excuse for him,' his owner confessed; and yet he made a hack of Berzak, as the phrase goes, at Doncaster last September, and, in the Two Thousand, Berzak stuck to him and was beaten scarcely a neck. The admission of 'no excuse' does away with the hope that Velasquez may see a better day, and, indeed, at the last, confidence in him waned on the part of his friends. Lord Rosebery's estimate, as quoted above, referred to a somewhat earlier period than the beginning of last month, for, just before the One Thousand, Walters, the trainer, speaking of Chelàndry, observed, 'I am much more hopeful to-day than I was on Wednesday.' If all goes well with Galtee More it looks as if he would assuredly win the Derby—as it seemed under similar circumstances that Surefoot would do in 1890 when he won as handsomely.

What is there to inspire a contrary belief as regards Galtee More? There are those who, in spite of the fact that at Newmarket he seemed to win more decisively the further he went, have an idea that his pedigree does not suggest a stayer—the infusion of Springfield blood is thought to be the weak point—as to which, however, the question arises, What is likely to stay better, at any rate at Epsom? A more cogent reason for the suspicion that Galtee More may not have a long and brilliant career before him is based upon doubts as to whether he is certain to stand. For some weeks in the spring he did his work in such gingerly fashion that the idea of everything not being altogether well with him was strongly suggested, and a very shrewd old trainer at Newmarket, who looked him over carefully, imagined

that he could detect a probable cause of trouble in one of the colt's forelegs. There he noticed a protuberant vein, which his experience of horses similarly affected induced him to believe might occasion well-founded anxiety. This may have led to those temporary stoppages of work which marked Galtee More's spring preparation. If so, care and treatment then overcame the impending mischief, but if the exceptionally good judge who pointed the matter out to me is right, the danger remains.

I am inclined to fancy that the two-year-olds this season are likely to prove at least a good average lot. I do not mean those that had been out up to the end of the First Spring Meeting at Newmarket. These early ones are invariably overrated, and the stories we hear of prices offered—stories usually incorrect, but occasionally true—show that there are both buyers and sellers about, or rather buyers and others who refuse to sell, on whom experience is lost. Perthshire is possibly the best that has been out in the South of England, but he did not beat the Prince of Wales' filly Mousme without having to be asked to gallop, and Mousme is described to me as 'only a sharp plater.' Perthshire ran a little 'green,' very possibly, and may do better next time; but I know of several stables in which there are animals far superior to any that they have yet sent out with successful results; and there are others, again, of whom great hopes are entertained, though nothing is yet really known about them. These last are not ready to be tried, though owners and trainers form opinions from the way the youngsters move in rough gallops. When they are actually put to the test they may very possibly disappoint expectations.

'He does not like me!' a trainer observed to me on Newmarket Heath, the other day, as we sat on our hacks looking at the string walk past, and one of them turned his head apparently to glance at my companion. 'Why should he object to you?' I asked. 'You have never been on his back or hurt him in any way?' 'Don't you suppose he knows who gives him his work every morning? He does, I'm sure of it, well enough! He knows that I send him the gallops he objects to, and so he objects to me.' It is a curious idea, but the speaker has been intimately associated with horses for more than half a century, and does not talk at random. Horses are no doubt vastly more sensible than

people usually suppose, and another extraordinary thing about them is the effect of heredity. Trayles, who won the Ascot Cup in 1889, was a queer-tempered horse, with one peculiarity—he would never walk into his stable. When the door was opened it was his invariable custom to dash in hastily, and when it was perceived that nothing would induce him to do otherwise, the door by which he entered was specially enlarged so that he should not knock himself as he ran into his box. He has a two-year-old son in a Newmarket stable who does precisely the same thing! So, by the way, it is with hounds. When out with the Duke of Beaufort's, some years ago, I noticed one that would trot persistently close behind the huntsman's horse, and I was told that his mother had always followed the same practice.

BALLADE OF OLD CRICKET BALLS

My fingers play about your seams,
  Your seams well worn with many blows;
I see in Memory's golden gleams
  Our triumphs o'er a hundred foes;
  And, ah! the pride within me glows
As each big fight the mind recalls;
  I taste the pleasure Conquest knows,
With ye, my dear old Cricket Balls.

Whate'er the bats, whate'er the teams,
  From Season's start until its close
Well did ye aid me in my schemes
  For their respective overthrows.
  Was it the man who rashly mows?
Or he who blocks? They had their falls
  From yorkers, and from twisting slows,
With ye, my dear old Cricket Balls.

Was it the man who much esteems
  A stout defence, a faultless pose?
Ye sometimes dropped amid the beams
  Of sunshine playing round his toes,
  And sometimes 'kicked,' upon his nose!
I made them to look out for squalls,
  Or were they amateurs or pro's,
With ye, my dear old Cricket Balls.

ENVOY

Ah, but my liking for ye grows;
To muse on happy days ne'er palls,
And none were happier than were those
With ye, my dear old Cricket Balls.

JOS. BARON.

BALLADE OF THE SLOGGER

He comes, with mischief in his eye;
He takes his block with jaunty air;
The bowler heaves a mighty sigh,
And offers up a silent prayer!
He knows the slogger doesn't care
A fig for science or for style;
He knows there's nought he will not dare,
The man who welts them all the while.

The bowler bowls 'em rather high,
They go for sixes here and there;
The breakbacks on the off all fly
For fours beyond the reach of 'square.'
(He'll reach a wide, and score a pair,
And at his cleverness will smile!)
By George! he makes the bowlers swear,
The man who welts them all the while.

No matter what good thing you try,
No style of bowling will he spare:
There's ne'er a bye when he is nigh,
He'll somehow spank it hard *somewhere*!
Ye trundlers swear, and tear your hair,
'Tis useless trying to beguile
That only 'demon bowler' scare,
The man who welts them all the while.

ENVOY

Friends, pretty bats may do their share,
But I would travel many a mile
To bag my Club that dreaded player,
The man who welts them all the while.

JOS. BARON.

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